348 Days Since
The Unsolved Murder

₱TWO-FIFTY

Mr.&Ms.

AUG. 3, 1984 • 47 of a series for Justice and National Reconciliation

TEAR GAS!

Mr. & Ms.

47th OF A SERIES
FOR JUSTICE & NATIONAL
RECONCILIATION

AUGUST 3, 1984

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LETTERS

Outraged 'Aunt'

As a matter of record, please answer the following question: How did you or your editors arrive at the conclusion that "your aunt" in the transcript of the taped telephone conversation between Dr. B. Lapus and Jose Fronda Santos (Mr. & Ms. 20 July 1984) is "the code name for Carmen Guerrero Nakpil"? Surely you owe me or at least your readers an explanation.

I have never even met Mr. Fronda Santos and although Dr. Lapus has been a consultant of TRC, I am not related to him except professionally. The rest of the details are available in the records of the Agrava Commission where I testified on 28 July 1984.

If, as you mentioned in our telephone conversation, Mr. & Ms. is only "completing our documentation" you should at least include the explanation for this completely outrageous liberty you have taken with my identity.

CARMEN GUERRERO NAKPIL
Technology Resource Center
Ministry of Human Settlements

The taped conversation between Jose Fronda Santos in San Diego, California and Bartolome Lapus in his residence in Mandaluyong on Feb. 9, 1984 was presented to the Agrava Board last June 8 in Los Angeles, California when Santos testified. The taped recording is tagged Exhibit 412. Originally in Pampango and Pilipino, the transcript of the taped conversation was translated into English by Heroico Aguiluz. Double checking against the transcript of the Agrava Board stenographer, the name "Titang Martil" appears but rechecking with the taped recording itself, the name "Chitang Nakpil" is clearly heard. In the supplemental memorandum and transcript submitted by Psinakis to the Agrava Board, Aguiluz introduced in parenthesis *(code name for Chitang Nakpil)* which for purposes of clarity Mr. & Ms. changed to *Carmen Guerrero-Nakpil.*

The mere fact that Ms. Nakpil was asked to testify before the Agrava Board which she did last June 28 (and not July 28 as indicated in her letter) means that the Board was certain that the Chitang Nakpil mentioned in the taped conversation could only be Carmen Guerrero-Nakpil, head of the Technology Resource Center.

Nakpil told the Board she had nothing to do whatsoever with the cloak-and-dagger operations of Dr. Bartolome Lapus. Lapus had earlier testified he told Nakpil that Santos knew of bombings and assassination plots. Nakpil would only admit that she went out of her way to ask Makati Mayor Nemesio Yabut to give Lapus and Santos' uncle Geronimo Fronda, an unspecified amount of money as their reward for informing Mayor Yabut of an assassination plot against him. This was reported in the July 6 issue (No. 42 in the series) of Mr. & Ms. — ED.

Criminals in uniform

We strongly protest and denounce the criminal behavior of General Narciso Cabrera and all the soldiers who were present at the Liwasang Bonifacio the afternoon of July 23, 1984, and carried out the unprovoked tear gas assault on demonstrators and bystanders.

We were a group of women who went there to join a peaceful rally. Before we were criminally assaulted, everything was peaceful. People were sitting with us on the steps in front of the post office, and praying the rosary with us.

All of a sudden without any reason or provocation, four truckloads of soldiers put on their gas masks and started throwing tear gas bombs at the crowd of people in front of us. Everybody started to run including those who were with us on the steps. We women continued praying the rosary and did not move. But the soldiers who saw us sitting quietly with rosaries in our hands hurled two tear gas bombs at us too. We had no alternative but to run, as the fumes were enveloping and blinding us. Not satisfied with throwing two tear gas bombs at us, they deliberately ran after us, hounding us and throwing several more along our path. Clearly the soldiers enjoyed tor-

"We were just sitting on the steps praying the rosary" when the tear gas bombs came. (Photographed by J.P. FENIX)

turing us in a very sadistic way. We had no guns nor truncheons, we only had our rosary beads.

Is this the freedom and democracy, the maximum tolerance that Ferdinand Marcos always brags about to the foreign press? While he talked of unity at the Batasan, Gen. Cabrera and his soldiers, on orders from higher up were cruelly assaulting and injuring peaceful demonstrators. Is this the love that Imelda Marcos is constantly mouthing to the various groups she gathers in Malacanang?

We are neither subversives nor communists. We are ordinary Filipino housewives joining a peaceful protest, exercising our human right to assemble for redress of our grievances against the leadership and officialdom whose policies, mismanagement, and subservience to foreign interests have impoverished, destroyed, humiliated the Filipino, enslaved him in his own land, and placed his very life and liberty at the mercy of military forces, both uniformed and "secret", licensed to kill, injure and apprehend by the decrees which the Integrated Bar and legal organizations have denounced as unconstitutional and violative of human rights.

We consider the action of Gen. Cabrera and his soldiers a criminal assault on our persons and a violation of our basic freedom of peaceful assembly and free speech.

Ferdinand Marcos as president and Commander-in-Chief is fully responsible for the unlawful and criminal acts of Gen. Cabrera and the officers and men who followed the order to carry out the vicious teargas assault. These are culpable, inexcusable violations of the Constitutional provisions on the rights of citizens. We call for a court martial of Gen. Cabrera and the officers and men involved.

Our countrymen must unite in peaceful protest against the darkening clouds of violence hovering over our country, or all our freedoms will be lost.

CONCERNED WOMEN OF THE PHILIPPINES

Who Agrava?

Who is Ms. Corazon Agrava anyway? An instrument of Mr. Marcos' administration? A finder of truth? A Great Pretender? A singer? Or a spender of million pesos of the tax payers' money?

How can we expect an independent and impartial Board when they were all singing "Happy Birthday" to the First Lady?

BOY TAMAYO
Meralco

• • •

I hope and pray that once and for all the Agrava Board will be true to its words. Now that Ms. Agrava declared that the verdict will soon come before Aug. 21, 1984, surely the Filipino people will again be hoping for this.

The degree of integrity and credibility the Board has, cannot in anyway be ascertained for now, but soon will be. In this present writing of history, the Filipino people, more than ever deserves the truth. That TRUTH which is pure, definite and absolute. And so no matter how evident the falsity is, no matter how many witnesses sustained its argument, it remains still a falsehood because it was substantiated with lies.

On the other hand, though slightly hinted at or even barely evidenced is the TRUTH. It should always prevail. For by "telling the truth in LOVE we should grow up in every way towards Him who is the Head – Christ." (Ephesians 4:15)

I think that at this point in time, the Agrava Board should now try to deal more with their conscience than any voluminous evidence it has collected.

Let not the Agrava Board forget that in the end the Filipino people is the ultimate judge. And in so far as the verdict is concerned – they have given theirs.

I believe that this hard task that the Board is undertaking is a rare privilege to serve our people. While I do not challenge them to be heroes in this modern era, yet I do believe that it would be inevitable that they'll be heroes in the hearts and minds of the people, the moment they declare the TRUTH. For the Filipinos of today will ask for nothing more but will accept nothing less.

FERNANDO LI. COMMANDANTE
Bgy. 821, Bo. Sto. Cristo
Tarlac, Tarlac

• • •

This is an inquiry for clarification from the military on certain points regarding the assassination of Senator Benigno Aquino Jr.

Why were the foreign correspondents and photographers accompanying Sen. Aquino from the China Air Lines prevented from going down the ladder of the plane to the tarmac? If the military, as claimed, have gathered enough intelligence reports regarding the plan of the communists to assassinate Sen. Aquino, they should have allowed the foreign correspondents to go along with Sen. Aquino so that pictures and full coverage of the incident could be taken. Is it not rather strange why all the military personnel equipped with camera blundered in taking pictures of the incident.

What were the more than 1000 soldiers assigned at the airport on August 21st for? They were supposed to provide security for Sen. Aquino in view of the intelligence information of the

communist plan to assassinate Sen. Aquino. They failed miserably to provide such security. Instead, the soldiers prevented the public from witnessing the actual murder of Sen. Aquino.

ANTONIO ASTILLA
Gingoog City

Ruth and Cory

In your July 20, 1984 issue, I was deeply touched by the caption at the bottom of the picture of Dona Aurora and Cory which read: "the Two First Ladies of the Aquino Family". It reminded me of a book in the Bible entitled Ruth.

There was a woman named Naomi whose husband and two sons died. Ruth, one of her daughters-in-law who was herself a widow, clung to Naomi and said, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God." (Ruth 1:6). So Naomi, together with Ruth, returned to her homeland, Bethlehem, and stayed there. Ruth was later married to Boaz. They had a son and Naomi took care of him. According to the Jewish law of redemption and succession, Naomi was considered the great great grandmother of David, the great king of Israel.

In the story, Naomi and Ruth came to Bethlehem at the end of a long drought and at the beginning of a rich harvest. Dona Aurora and Cory appeared after the outpouring of an abundant rain (Ninoy's blood spilled) and at the beginning of a similarly great harvest. I believe that Cory has found her Boaz and Doña Aurora has received a son — the new breed of Filipinos.

To the two First Ladies of the Aquino family — may the Lord our God bless and keep you. To Mr. & Ms., the nation's durable and reliable harvest implement — more power.

LUIS A. VALENCIA, JR.
18 Libertad Street
Mandaluyong, M.M.

Yniguez in congress

I wish to call your attention to your article on Assemblyman Nicanor E. Yniguez appearing on page 8 of your 41st Series for Justice and Reconciliation Issue wherein reference is made to "his election as Speaker Pro-Tempore of the House in the early '70s x x x."

Allow me to set the record straight and to volunteer additional information that may be enlightening to your readers.

Then Congressman Nicanor E. Yniguez made a bid for the Speakership of the House of Representatives after the 1969 elections after he secured pledges of support from 66 reelected and newly elected Congressmen. Before the opening of the First Regular Session on the fourth Monday of January, 1970, however, former Speaker Cornelio T. Villareal of Capiz was chosen for the post of Speaker by the majority party then and Congressman Jose T. Aldeguer of Iloilo was elected the Speaker Pro-Tempore.

Yniguez was named to chair instead the Committee on Foreign Affairs; at the same time his nomination was confirmed as the First Vice-Chairman of the powerful Committee on Appropriations.

As First Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, Yniguez always took the floor to ably justify the actions of the Appropriations Committee on the budgetary requests of the Departments of Foreign Affairs and National Defense, the latter being the target of intensive interrogations from and heated debates with the Minority members of the House during the floor discussions.

Also as Vice-Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Yniguez invariably became a ranking Member of the House-Senate Conference Committee on the General Appropriations Bill, where he took up the cudgels for President Marcos when the latter's power to transfer funds from one office to another in the Exeuctive Department was being assailed by the members of the Senate notably then Senator Arturo Tolentino. Likewise, Yniguez sparred with Senator Gerardo Roxas on the latter's persistent pleas to pare the National Defense Budget to the bone. Somehow, the late Senator Roxas capitulated to the telling arguments of then Chairman Jose M. Alberto and Vice-Chairman Yniguez, during the lighter moments of the conference, that the latter was being groomed for the position of Secretary of National Defense (upon the resignation of Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile who was then being drafted for the senatorial slate in the forthcoming 1971 senatorial elections); and that Yniguez was appointed, he would need all the financial support that Congress could give to the Defense establishment.

Yniguez never made it to the Speakership then; neither to the Speaker Pro-Tempore post nor to the position of Secretary of National Defense, but if Senator Gerry Roxas were alive today, he would be happy to learn that his 'brod", Assemblyman Nicanor E. Yniguez of Southern Leyte finally made it to the Speakership of the Batasang Pambansa.

MARTIN RAMON MAZA, JR.
Quezon City
Former Chief of the Appropriations
Technical Staff of the Defunct
House of Representatives

Tondo poor, not dumb

I'm so tired of hearing this rediculous line "The people were promised free-everything". I'm disgusted that the First Lady sincerely believes that this is the main reason why most of her boys lost in the recent election. This is an insult to the intelligence of the people of Tondo.

We Tondo folk may be poor but not that dumb! Can't the First Lady simply see that people are tired already? Whenever her picture appears on the front page, you hear the following common comments: *"Bida na naman!"*, *"Aalis na naman!"* *"Siya na lang ang magaling!"*, *"Maglulustay na naman ng pera ng mamamayan!"*, on the street and in the public market.

People are simply tired of watching her, her family and her cronies indulging in luxuries here and there while we the ignorant Tondo folks can barely feed our stomachs 3 times a day. We don't even know where to dump the water that floods our home since the canals are clogged. We are already at our wits' end as to where to steal the money to cloth ourselves and our children decently.

Yes, we are poor. We see in the Opposition a chance to live honorably and decently.

DALE CHANCO
J. Abad Santos St.
Tondo, Manila

STATEMENT OF CONCERN

'Libel is not an acceptable weapon of dissent'

Two-hundred ninety-six reporters, editors, columnists, creative writers and photographers have signed the following "Statement of Concern" to help defend the people's right to a free press.

The statement was issued in the wake of two libel suits filed against Panorama magazine claiming P220 million in damages — the most expensive suits yet in the history of Philippine journalism. The cases were filed by AFP chief of staff Gen. Fabian C. Ver and industrialist Eduardo Cojuangco over a story on the investigation of the Aquino assassination.

WE view with alarm the ominous implications of President Marcos' statement in his July 23rd State-of-the-Nation address which now classifies libel with violence and subversion: "Violence, subversion and libel are not acceptable weapons of dissent in a democratic society." Side by side with this is the grave threat posed by Presidential Decree 1834 which makes "unlawful use of publications" punishable by death or life imprisonment.

We view with concern recent developments which threaten the freedom of journalists to report and comment on issues of public importance.

We are alarmed by the increasing number of libel suits filed against journalists by public officials and the military. This form of harassment in the guise of legal action threatens the citizens' constitutional right to be informed.

This month alone, two libel suits in the amount of P220-million were filed against the Bulletin Publishing Corp., Panorama editor Domini Torrevillas-Suarez and writer Mauro Avena for the publication of lawyer Lupino Lazaro's views on the Aquino assassination and the conduct of the Agrava Board investigation.

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In 1982, the editor-publisher of We Forum was charged with libel for running a series of articles that questioned the authenticity of President Marcos' war decorations.

In 1983, five women journalists were threatened with libel suits for exposés on military abuses in Panorama magazine. One case, against freelance writer Ceres Doyo and editor Torrevillas-Suarez, has actually been filed in court.

In the same year, Bulletin correspondent Isidoro Chammag was charged with libel for his report on military abuses in Abra.

The provincial press and the foreign press in the Philippines are no less vulnerable to "legalized" harassments. They have had their share of libel suits, some of which are still pending in the courts.

Suing for libel has traditionally been the defense of aggrieved citizens. Today, however, libel suits have become a convenient instrument of the state to cow and intimidate journalists through court action. A sad consequence of this is the blacklisting of writers by publications wary of libel suits.

We strongly protest these continuing assaults on press freedom.

We appeal to the courts and the fiscal's office to help restore the people's right to a free press.

We affirm our commitment to fair and responsible journalism, and our solidarity with our harassed colleagues.

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WPD superintendent Brig. Gen. Narciso Cabrera and cohorts await glumly the arrival of protest marchers.

ON OUR COVER:
A man overcome by the fumes of teargas on Quezon Bridge in Quiapo flees from the jeep-riding, tear-gas lobbing police of the Western Police District. His distress and pain are every Filipino's whose legitimate dissent has been met by police power. Photographed by VAL RODRIGUEZ of the Associated Press.

IN full regalia, elite anti-riot units advance on their victims.

Photographed by JOHNNY VILLENA

Tears you up-the third time around

FIVE thousand marchers protesting the unprovoked police-Metrocom assault and tear-gassing of the July 23 rally at Liwasang Bonifacio were themselves the recipients of the same drastic treatment from special riot units of the Western Police Department last July 26, even as they headed up Quezon Bridge where they planned to disperse.

Action started early in the afternoon with demonstrators from ATOM, CORD, NAJFD, AMA, KMLK and KMU, led by Agapito "Butz" Aquino of ATOM and CORD, converging in front of the WPD headquarters on U.N. Avenue, where WPD superintendent Brig. Gen. Narciso Cabrera and his riot troopers in anti-riot regalia lay in wait. The planned indignation rally in front of the WPD headquarters was disallowed, nor was Aquino's request for a copy of the military report on alleged subversive infiltration of the demonstrators' ranks entertained.

DEMONSTRATORS link arms, backing up towards Quiapo Bridge as they face advancing police.

VICTIM.

RUNNING away from it all.

However, Gen. Cabrera allowed the marchers to pass through U.N. Avenue, in front of the WPD Station 5.

The marchers then turned left at Taft Avenue, proceeding towards Manila City Hall where Aquino sought an audience with Mayor Ramon Bagatsing. The latter was out, so the group decided to hold a program in the vicinity of City Hall, until news came that the police were advancing from U.N. Avenue to break them up.

A negotiating team composed of Butz Aquino, MABINI lawyer Rene Saguisag and UP Student Council chairman Leandro Alejandro appealed to Col. Vicente Vinarao, WPD intelligence division head, who led the WPD riot units, to allow the demonstrators to disperse peacefully in Quiapo, to no avail. The gas-masked troopers riding in some six vehicles lobbed tear gas cannisters as demonstrators linking arms backed up Quiapo bridge. The assault, carried out during the afternoon rush-hour sent protesters and scores of innocent bystanders screaming and scrambling to safety over the

ALONE with nowhere to go, lone demonstrator staggers in a cloud of tear gas on top of Quiapo bridge.

concrete islands of Quiapo bridge, even as traffic screeched to a halt. Police reports later said hundreds of vendors, commuters, shoppers, students emerging from classes, and theater-goers in the Quiapo church area suffered from tear-gas inhalation. At least one coed was reported seriously burned when hit by a tear-gas bomb lobbed by police and one demonstrator was injured by a pillbox explosion on Quezon Bridge.

This was the third rally to be dispersed by the police with tear gas, the first being the July 6 march to Malacanang.

LITA T. LOGARTA

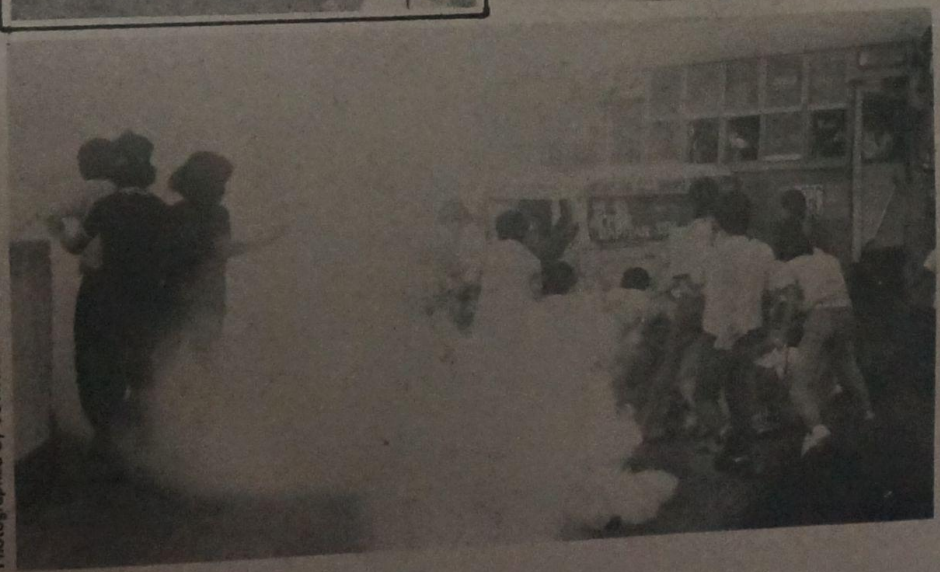
. . . RUN, Reli German, run! Fotog in medical mask is fleeter of foot.

Photographed by BULLIT MARQUEZ, AP

ANGUISHED demonstrators and by-standers scramble to safety.

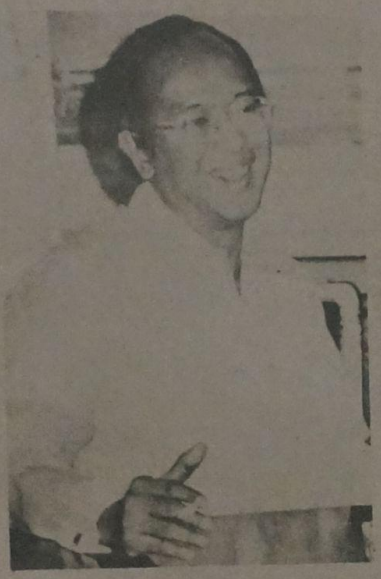
. . . EVEN as a Good Samaritan offers water-soaked rag to fleeing mother and child.

VENDORS abandon bananas at Quinta market.



Photographed by JOHNNY VILLENA

TEARGAS thrown by the WPD SWAT cuts a wide swath of pain and confusion in Quiapo.



AUTHOR, former U.P. president, wants answers.

Seven questions on the case of Banco Filipino

by EMANUEL V. SORIANO

ON Monday, July 23, 1984, the public was informed that Banco Filipino (BF) had declared a "bank holiday" because of the bank's inability to service withdrawals by its depositors. There had been heavy withdrawal for some weeks and this escalated into a "run" when behind the scenes negotiations between the Central Bank (CB) and BF bogged down.

In a letter to President Marcos on July 26, his intercession was sought by Banco Filipino's founding president, Mr. Tomas B. Aguirre.

On July 29, the Central Bank published a notice to all BF depositors, in Bulletin Today, which stated, among others, that in accordance with its function of "administering the banking system":

1. BF would be reopened on Wednesday, Aug. 1, 1984,
2. an independent management acceptable to the CB, BF Conservator Mr. Basilio Estanislao, had been appointed, and
3. a loan line of P3 billion had been approved to "ensure full payment to BF depositors".

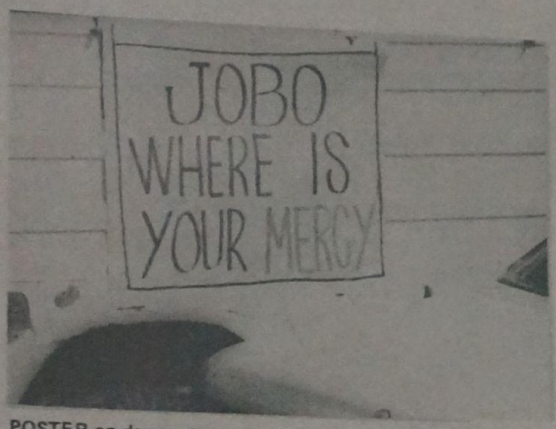
The CB expressed the hope that these moves would "rapidly diffuse the uncertainty that presently exists".

Obviously, all of us share the CB's desire to diffuse the uncertainty.

However, certain serious questions about the BF case must be

BF employees on "bank holiday" rally in front of Central Bank.

Photographed by REY VIVO



POSTER on demonstrators' vehicle socks it to CB Governor.

asked and satisfactorily answered if declining public confidence in the banking system is to be fully restored.

After all, the BF case is symptomatic of what ails the entire banking system.

For too long has the public been kept in the dark on matters that directly affect them and the banking system is one area of great concern. It is time for the public to ask questions and receive candid answers.

Here, therefore, are seven questions:

1. Why did the BF case have to go all the way to President Marcos?

The Bulletin Today reported last week that President Marcos ordered the re-opening of Banco Filipino. Why did he have to come into the picture? Is this not antithetical to the Charter of the Central Bank whose underlying philosophy is to make the CB independent of the political structure? Is the President more knowledgeable than the Monetary Board on matters affecting the banking system? Is the re-opening of BF therefore, contrary to what the Monetary Board would have preferred? If so, what was the Monetary Board's preferred solution?

2. The solution of the BF case, as announced on July 29 and summarized above, seems straightforward enough. Why the mysterious delay in arriving at this decision?

BF actually closed its doors on July 23rd. Why did this have to happen? Does not the banking community have an effective negotiating mechanism with the Central Bank where, on the basis of early warning signals, it is possible to head off a situation of crisis proportions? This was done in the case of Manila Bank. Why not for Banco Filipino? BF offered, on July 12, to turn over the administration of BF to the CB. What was done in connection with this offer?

3. Why was there a need to appoint an independent management acceptable to the Central Bank?

The public is entitled to know what made the CB lose its confidence in the BF management team. It will be a lesson to us all on what to avoid in the future. On the other hand, the BF management has charged that the CB, in addition to other external factors, caused BF's difficulties through abuse of authority. Specifically, did the CB violate Section 27 of the CB Charter on confidentiality of examinations?

The public is entitled to know the answers to these questions so they can judge for themselves the sense of responsibility of the managers of our Central Bank and of our banking community.

4. What were the causes of BF's liquidity problem and the heavy withdrawals experienced by BF? The political and economic instability of the country? The credit squeeze caused by the increase in reserve requirements? The CB effort to push up interest rates through CB bills paying 26 to 38% interest? BF's overinvestment in the government's housing program? Errors in administrative procedures at the CB (e.g., BF was told to stop issuing Managers Checks on July 12)?

Some credible answers have to be given. Otherwise, the BF situation may not be the last because it seems quite apparent that the BF crisis is not an isolated case.

5. Did some group want to take over BF? Why?

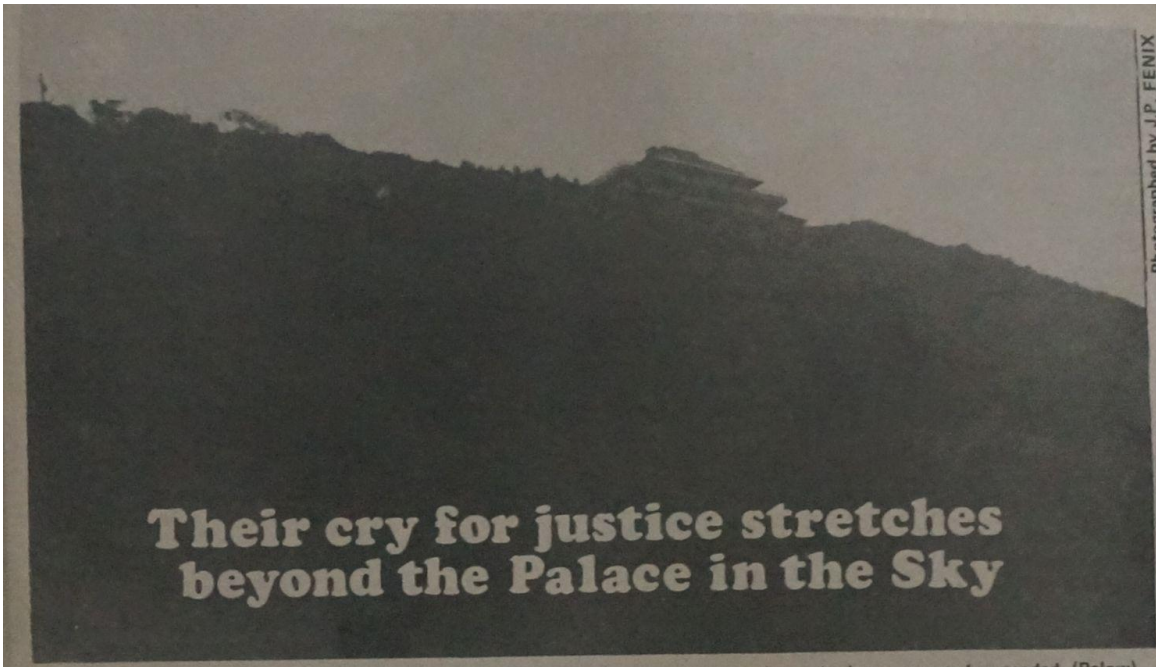
In a country whose economy is known for "crony capitalism", there have been, in the last few weeks, speculations that there were buyers interested to take over Banco Filipino. Is this true? How did this factor affect the early resolution or lack of it of the BF case?

6. On July 13, BF was informed, through counsel, that there was no way the CB can help BF because the limit had been reached. Therefore, on what basis is the CB now helping BF to the tune of a P3 billion loan line? If this was not possible on July 13, what made it possible on July 27 — the date of the CB decision published in the newspaper on July 29?

7. On July 16, why did a majority of BF stockholders agree to sell out? Was it in the greater interest of the depositors and stability of the banking system or were they under some kind of duress?

There are many more questions that can be asked. But, these seven questions are enough for now.

My hope is that, sooner, rather than later, a joint statement, in answer to these questions, will be published by the Central Bank and the Board of Banco Filipino which will indeed "diffuse the uncertainty" that presently still exists. **MM**

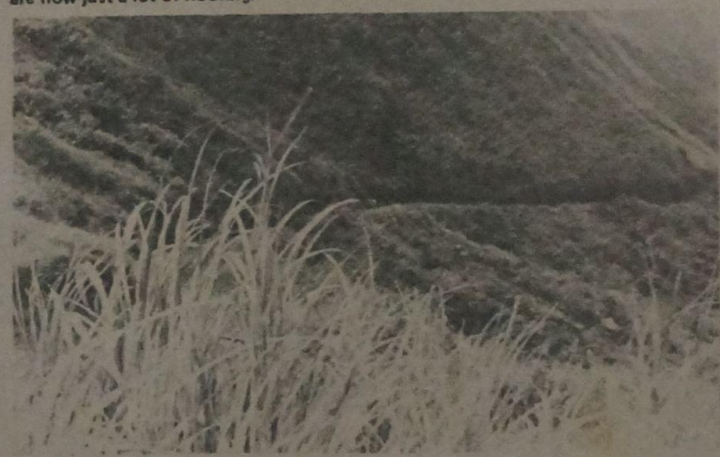


Photographed by J.P. FENIX

Their cry for justice stretches beyond the Palace in the Sky

by J.P. FENIX

ON the peak of Mt. Gonzales, a palace that nobody ever wanted or needed. (Below) WHERE the fruit and coffee trees and root crops were at the foot of the mountain are now just a lot of nothing.



IT is in the city of Tagaytay that the famous Taal volcano may be seen sitting within a great lake blanketed by misty gray even at midmorning. It is here that Mt. Gonzales stands majestically, crowned on its peak with Tagaytay's Palace in the Sky. It is also here that 13 people (social workers, resource persons, farmers and a lawyer) gathered for a two-day seminar to discuss the plight of 17 families from Barangays Kalaboso and Dapdap, two villages located at the foot of Mt. Gonzales.

On May 15, 1982, groundwork started on the peak of Mt. Gonzales to make way for the construction of the Palace in the Sky which, rumor says, was to have been used by U.S. President Ronald Reagan during his (aborted) visit in 1983 to the Philippines. Dynamite blasting and bull-dozing shaved 37 meters off the mountain's original peak. This carried on until July resulting in landslides covering seven hectares of farmland. The damage consisted mostly of coffee and fruit trees and root crops with an estimated value of P135,572. On Aug. 30 of the same year, members of the two barangays brought a petition to Tagaytay City Mayor Hilarion Maglabe stating the claim of the 17 families for just compensation for the damage. Maglabe in turn forwarded the claim to the City Engineer's Office where it stopped cold for one year in spite of weekly follow-ups by ten farmers. The Office of the City Engineer allegedly took action only after increasing the damage claim to P269,388, offering to split the difference with the farmers. The latter, however, stuck to their original claim.

It has been almost two years since the first petition was filed with the Mayor's office, and still the 17 families have not been compensated for the loss of their main source of income. Since then some of the claimants have grown

weary and given up hope of ever getting what they deserve. Some have even gone to the extent of leaving the homes they have had for many years to find work elsewhere even if it means heavier work with less earnings. But for those who stayed on, like Aquilina Terrible, giving up was never attractive. The authorities were bombarding them with a load of paperwork and requirements which prompted them to seek outside help. The City Engineer asked them for pictures of the damage, sworn statements from each claimant, and Statements of Assets and Liabilities, among other things. Each time they returned to submit a requirement, a new one was asked from them. Aquilina later mentioned that she went to the extent of threatening to expose the City Engineer's malingering to the media if he kept holding back the requirements needed. He didn't heed her words so she aired her grievances over Radio Veritas. In the end, the list of requirements that was given to her was still incomplete. The whole thing could have taken less than a month if the proper procedure was stated in the first place. Aquilina's group approached their friends at two non-government service organizations — the Lingap sa Kalusugan ng Sambayanan (LIKAS), a community-based health care group working in the area, and Batas, a lawyers' group involved in community legal education.

With the help of these friends, and in spite of the great difficulty, they managed to procure these requirements. Finally, the City Engineer forwarded the case to the City Auditor's Office for endorsement, and then to the Region IV office of the Ministry of Public Works and Highways.

Last July 21 and 22, 1984, a group of non-government service organizations, headed by Tootsie Herrera of LIKAS, met with the farmers to discuss and analyze the problems they had met in the course of their case. Together, the farmers and the NGO workers closely reviewed each step of the farmers' action. Batas had also invited Leo Villanueva, a fisherman from Talim Island in Laguna de Bay, to share the experiences of his own organization, a fisherman's confederation, in coping with problems of a similar nature. Lawyer Hector Soliman of Batas made them aware of their legal rights, particularly in this case. He also talked about possible courses of legal action as well as other unconventional but lawful means of achieving their goal.

As the meeting progressed, it became increasingly clear that the problem was more than the local government giving the farmers the usual bureaucratic run-around. In the course of the analysis it was revealed that the MPWH had returned the petition to the City Engineer's Office with more requirements to be fulfilled. According to Soliman, the MPWH could not determine whether the damaged property belonged to the owner of the land or to the farmers. What was needed therefore was a waiver from the landowner stating that the crops belonged to the farmers. The MPWH had also requested the City Engineer and Auditor for an inspection report of the damage and their corresponding recommendation with supporting documents. It was also discovered that the land had been declared for tax purposes as residential, not agricultural land. To cap it all, the land had earlier been mortaged and was now being forclosed by the Philippine Veterans Bank (PVB). All these meant additional paperwork and more time.

According to Aquilina, the land had been originally owned by a certain Mr. Bach even before Tagaytay became a city. Bach had asked the farmers in the surrounding area to plant perennial trees to prevent erosion of the soil. One of the farmers had been Regino Terrible, Aquilina's father. Aquilina said that after some years, the farmers decided to form an association. Mr. Bach, she added, got so apprehensive of this move that he sold the land to a certain Santiago Montemayor. They never saw or heard from this Montemayor except through a member of the community who was Montemayor's assigned caretaker. Little did they know that the land had been declared as residential and had been mortgaged. Neither did they know that Montemayor had since gone to the United States, where he passed away a month ago.

At first, things did not fit. Why would a landowner declare agricultural land as residential when clearly the real estate tax for a residential lot is higher than that of

AQUILINA TERRIBLE (at right) and Maria Terrible: or the original claimants, the waiting will continue.

an agricultural lot? The answer became obvious when news was received that the PVB had foreclosed the land. Montemayor had apparently declared his land as residential to raise its value so that he could get a higher loan from PVB, money which he probably took with him to the States. A tax declaration from the Tagaytay City government would have established its value, and a clean title enough to establish his ownership. The PVB branch in Manila where he got his loan would not to go all the way to Tagaytay to inspect it.

As of this writing, everything is back to square one. The City Engineer has the ball again, and

BARANGAY captain of Kalaboso. Kalaw Arcebuche: more than the usual bureaucratic runaround.

until he comes up with an inspection report, no progress will be made despite the PVB waiver on the ownership of the crops and all the other requirements that have been fulfilled by the few farmers left to fight the battle.

Now the farmers feel that the money they have been asking for is of secondary importance. As Aquilina puts it, it is the principle of the whole thing that matters most. They have never asked for a centavo more than what they deserved — than what they had a legal right to. They have been pushed around so much these past two years that the so-called just compensation they have been asking for has become so small compared to what the case has thus far cost them: the humiliation they faced whenever they attempted to follow up the case, the confusion they experienced each time complicated technicalities were thrown in their path, and above all the bitterness and pain that hit them when they saw the 50-year-old coffee trees, their whole life, destroyed by tons of rock and soil — all for a Palace nobody ever wanted or needed.

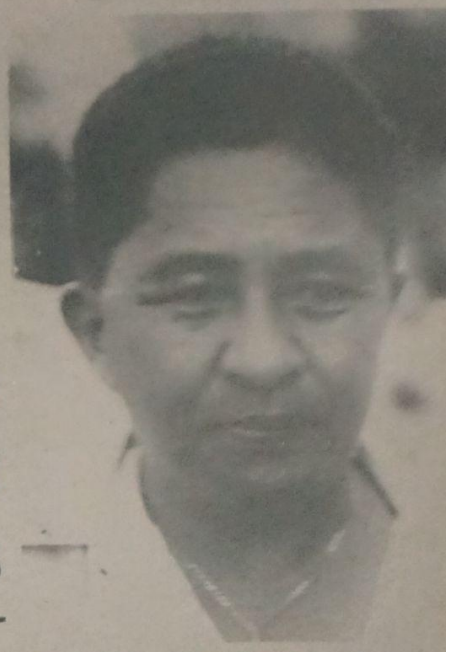
For Aquilina and her group, the waiting and the follow-ups will continue. But in the meantime there is a lot of work to do. The farmers of Barangays Kalaboso, Dapdap and neighboring areas still have to unite in order to work together against those who wish to strip them of their dignity as human beings. They realize that this event could just be a molehill compared to the more painful experiences to come: they have come across information that those responsible for the Palace are planning the "procurement" of 5,000 hectares of neighboring land. This area not only covers the land the rest of the community tills but possibly also their homes. What the land will be used for, nobody really knows yet; but the farmers of Kalaboso do not want to be caught off-guard, or disunited, this time. "What happened hurts," Aquilina says, "but it hurts more if you are alone to fight even by those who were hurt with me." But for her the fight goes on with or without allies. She will see this battle to the end. **ALTERNATIVE NEWS INDEX M.M**

IT'S ONLY A CARTOON by BEN DIA

THE PINOY WAILING WALL

Adaza challenges Marcos appointees with dual positions

by BELINDA OLIVARES-CUNANAN



HOMOBONO ADAZA: when is occupation by a member of Parliament of another post constitutional?

THIS week Opposition Assemblyman Homobono A. Adaza of Misamis Oriental elevated to the Supreme Court his by now highly controversial bid to hold on simultaneously to the governorship of his province, to which he was elected under the Mindanao Alliance in the local elections of 1980.

In attempting to keep both elective posts, Adaza, who has been no stranger to controversy since his colorful days in the U.P. as student leader and editor-in-chief of the Philippine Collegian nearly three decades ago, has stirred a controversy of far-reaching consequences. A controversy that has involved no less than the President himself and which will affect many of the country's elective and appointive officials, notably the seven governors and four city mayors who won as assemblymen last May.

Last week President Marcos declared that the constitutional provisions governing the holding of two elective positions "cannot be compromised" (but certain members of media noted that he kept quiet about appointive positions). Then, to indicate his strong interest in the Adaza case, the President personally inducted in Malacanang Misamis Oriental's KBL vice-governor, Fernando Pacana, to take Adaza's place as governor.

At week's end, the political situation in Misamis Oriental had become quite explosive, with about a thousand followers of Adaza forming a human barricade to prevent Pacana from taking over the padlocked offices of the governor at the Capitol building in Cagayan de Oro.

In elevating the issue to the Supreme Court, the Adaza case will lay open to probe the underlying root of the controversy, which is, the "arbitrariness" of the presidential interpretation of the Constitutional provisions pertaining to dual positions for Assemblymen. It will also inevitably reinforce the argument about the President's ability to skirt, by means of Amendment 6, the provisions of the basic law of the land.

When is occupation by a member of Parliament of another post constitutional? If the President can authorize it by a presidential decree, can a legislator also aspire to it by invoking the sovereignty of the people who elected him?

Far from being a mere local intramural, the Adaza case has provoked many reactions, mostly unfavorable to the central protagonist, Homobono Adaza, even from the ranks of the Opposition. For instance, Adaza's arch-rival and provincemate, Assemblyman Aquilino Pimentel, Jr. of Cagayan de Oro, has rapped him for taking the deplorable stance of the ruling party itself about dual positions. Even the alternative media has taken potshots of Adaza, agreeing many times with the so-called "crony press" about the "unconstitutionality' of his stand.

Curiously enough, while all the attacks were being trained on Adaza, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Assemblyman from Manila Arturo Tolentino decried that "elected assemblymen from both the KBL and the Opposition insisted on keeping their local government positions." He even read the silence of

both sides on the issue as "an apparent compromise between the parliamentary majority and the minority" and urged businessmen to file a suit with the Supreme Court to stop this "onerous practice that reduces the Constitution to a mere scrap of paper".

Part of Adaza's problem stems from the fact that his motive for wanting to fight for his governorship is so open to misinterpretation. Explaining his decision to test his case before the highest magistrate of the land, Adaza maintained that it is not sheer lust for power or position that motivated him, but a matter of principle. He points out that in the past six years of the interim Batasan Pambansa (IBP) and now in the young life of the regular Batasan, the President has bent the law to accomodate his favored assemblymen whenever it suited him; but when the Opposition tries to enjoy the same privilege he gives his friends, he is quick to question the constitutionality of their moves.

During his impassioned privileged speech in the Batasan recently, Adaza, who is undoubtedly one of the most articulate parliamentarians, decried that "there is one law for the members of the majority and another law for the Opposition. For when the President violates the Constitution, everything is 'constitutional'. But when Homobono Adaza, in his capacity as member of this body and governor of Misamis Oriental invoked his rights under the Constitution in the interests of the people of his province, he is faced with a presidential fiat that 'the law does not allow one to hold two positions at the same time'."

"The President's decisions regarding dual positions for Assemblymen have been very unfair to us in the Opposition and I want to challenge them once and for all in the Supreme Court," says Adaza.

What Adaza wants to get from the Supreme Court is a ruling that will bind both the ruling party and the Opposition, and above all, the President and his relatives and friends. Adaza says he will abide by such a decision too.

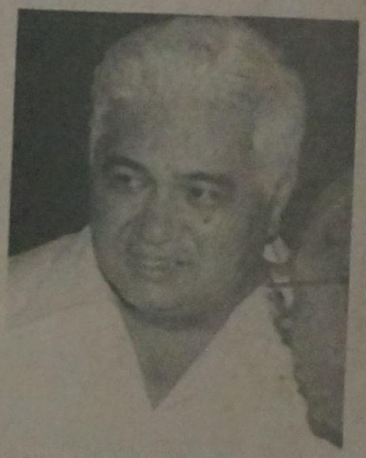
There are two provisions right now in the Constitution that prohibit the holding of two positions by legislators: 1) Section 10 of Article VIII, which rules that "a member of the National Assembly shall not hold any other office or employment in the Government, or any subdivision, agency or instrumentality thereof, including government-owned or controlled corporations, during his tenure, except that of Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Member of the Cabinet or Deputy Minister," and 2). Section 4 of Article XII, as amended, which provides that "Unless otherwise provided by law, no elective official shall be eligible for appointment to any office or position during his tenure except as Member of the Cabinet." To legal minds, the escape clauses in the second provision are the words 'tenure', 'Member of the Cabinet' and the phrase 'unless otherwise provided by law.'

In invoking these two provisions in the Adaza case, the President was quoted in the press as saying that such prohibition is "not dictated by our whims and caprices". But Adaza points out that contrary to what he claims, the President has precisely been whimsical and capricious in his interpretations, and moreover, "prone to doing indirectly what he cannot do directly". This, Adaza claims, is a clear violation of a fundamental principle of constitutional construction.

For instance, Adaza cites the case of the First Lady who was elected Assemblywoman of Metro Manila in 1978 and was subsequently appointed Minister of Human Settlements and Metro Manila Governor and Chairman of the Metro Manila Commission. Under Section 10 of Article VIII it was legal for her to have held the post of Minister, but Adaza maintains that the two other appointive posts were distinct and separate and not mere 'adjuncts' of the first appointive post, as has been the interpretation of the administration. Thus, claims Adaza, her appointment to those two positions was clearly a violation of the Constitution.

There is also the case of the President's brother-in-law, Ambassador to the U.S. and Governor of Leyte Benjamin Romualdez. In 1978, Romualdez was elected assemblyman of Leyte and in 1980 governor of the province. He never took his oath

ESTELITO MENDOZA: worst case of dual positions?



BENJAMIN ROMUALDEZ: a multiplicity of positions from Leyte to the U.S.

as assemblyman, however, but neither did he resign that post, points out Adaza. Then Romualdez was appointed ambassador to Washington D.C. Last May Gov. Romualdez again ran as assemblyman, but again he has failed to take his oath or sit in the Batasan and is apparently watching out what happens in the Adaza case.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Tolentino has advocated publicly that Romualdez should resign his two other positions if he is to assume his post as Batasan member. But then, added Tolentino, this involves a "political question;" a number of lawyers, however, sharply disagree with this opinion of Tolentino, citing that Romualdez' case is constitutional, not political.

The case of Solicitor-General Estelito Mendoza of Pampanga, who won as assemblyman in 1978 and was elected governor in 1980, is even worse. While holding the position of Solicitor-General, Mendoza took his oath as assembly man in 1978 and in 1980 assumed the post of Governor of Pampanga — all in clear violation of the Constitution.

Although Mendoza was said to have resigned as assemblyman after he delivered his valedictory as Governor, Adaza stresses that there is no record that he ever did resign from the IBP. Thus, his non-appearance there could be construed as dereliction of duty. Moreover, recently, Mendoza was said to have resigned as Pampanga governor, prior to his re-appointment as Solicitor General and his recent appointment as Minister of Justice and member of the Batasan. Adaza questions Mendoza's resignation since Vice-Governor Cicero Punsalan is still referred to as "acting governor"; either Mendoza has not yet resigned, or his resignation has not been accepted yet, says Adaza.

Stirring controversy recently are the cases of Assemblymen Rene Cayetano of Tagig-Muntinlupa and Ismael Mathay of Quezon City. Cayetano, who was appointed deputy minister of trade, was also recently appointed manager of the Export Processing Zone Authority (EPZA). Mathay, on the other hand, who had been appointed deputy minister of Human Settlements before last election, was also reappointed vice-governor of Metro Manila in accordance with P.D. 1841 last June 29. In "institutionalizing the set-up" wherein Mathay fulfills both appointments, points out Adaza, the presidential decree implies that the post of vice-governor was an 'adjunct' of that of deputy prime minister. Presumably another presidential decree has been issued 'legalizing' Cayetano's appointment to EPZA.

Clearly, in these cases, argues Adaza, the President has done indirectly, by means of P.D., what he could not do directly; moreover, his actuations in these cases have been very arbitrary, a clear violation of the Constitution, says Adaza.

While the law is very specific about prohibition of assemblymen to hold a second "appointive" or 'elective' post, except in the case of distinct Cabinet posts, Adaza stresses, the President has been arbitrarily misinterpreting the law to suit his whims. Which is why Adaza is seeking the Supreme Court ruling.

No one can successfully argue that the President is not aware of the provisions of the Constitution when he made all these appointments, says Adaza.

"How can the President now say, as he seems to be doing, that he has only now discovered the meaning of the Constitutional provision after six years — a man of his brilliance?" he questions. "If there is anyone who, as Minister Tolentino accuses, has succeeded in making 'a mere scrap of paper of the Constitution,' it is the President."

In arguing his case Adaza also cites the fact that the country has, for some time now, been operating under a parliamentary system, even if it is often referred to as "Philippine style". A parliamentary system where there theoretically is "a happy convergence between the legislative and the executive branches. Parliamentary democracies, by tradition, points out Adaza, allow members of parliament to hold positions in local governments, citing as examples the Mayor of Paris, Jacques Chirac, who has been simultaneously a parliamentarian for some ten years now, and the mayor of Bordeaux.

Adaza finds it curious that the administration cites the parliamentary system in its defense whenever it is convenient such as to justify the President's adherence to Amendment 6; it is always pointed out that there is a counterpart of this emergency decree-making power in the French parliamentary system, after which the Philippine system is patterned and "yet now, when we invoke our right to keep both legislative and executive posts under a true parliamentary system," points out Adaza, "The system is conveniently junked and reverted to the presidential."

For the controversial Homobono Adaza, who was incarcerated at the outset of martial law for some 1½ years ("after Ninoy Aquino and Pepe Diokno, I am the First Honor when it comes to length of imprisonment among Opposition leaders"), recalcitrance has gone a long way from the time when he was dropped from the list of U.P. graduates by the university executive committee because of the demonstrations he initiated, unheard of the late '50s, in protest of censorship of the student press. When his case goes to the Supreme Court he will be fighting one of the major battles of his life, but it is certain to leave a benchmark in the political as well as the judicial life of the country. **M M**

'Violence will never start from our ranks'

SOME ten thousand protest marchers bound for Liwasang Bonifacio last July 27 were blocked off on all routes to their goal by heavily massed anti-riot police, but, after negotiations with police authorities failed, peacefully regrouped and marched to Sto. Domingo Church instead for a mammoth indignation rally attended by 30,000 demonstrators.

As early as 2:00 p.m. that day, police set up four blockades at strategic locations: Taft Avenue-San Andres Rotonda; Liwasang Bonifacio, Nicanor Reyes and Recto; and Espana and Maceda in Sampaloc. The blocking force at Espana-Maceda led by Col. Edgar Dula Torres, WPD operations officer, reinforced by Philippine National Police Academy cadets, the PC Metrocom, and 150 Q.C. policemen commanded by Col. Romeo San Diego, took on the burden of confrontation with 3,000 marchers who had gathered at Espana near the Welcome Rotonda by 3:00 p.m., ready for the march to Liwasan.

Torres, however, upon instructions from Cabrera, warned rally leaders, led by Agapito "Butz" Aquino, former Labor Deputy Minister Amado "Gat" Inciong, and former Senator Ambrosio Padilla from crossing the Espana-Maceda intersection. Demonstrators, a multi-sectoral grouping of church people, professionals, labor, students and urban poor, waited calmly as negotiations went on, even as residents of the surrounding areas of Sampaloc cheered them on.

In a display of "organized unity" meant to avert a frontal clash with police, march leaders called off the Liwasan rally, acceded to police demands that they U-turn back to Quezon City and instead marched to Sto. Domingo Church for what turned out to be the biggest rally so far this protest-filled month of July 1984.

Declared Butz Aquino: "This is a moral victory for the protest movement since we have shown that violence will never start from our ranks." M M

. . . CONFRONTATION is the name of the game as U.P. Student Council Chairman Leandro Alejandro, Butz Aquino and other march leaders linking arms behind him, strides forward to face massed anti-riot troopers.

Photographed by JOHNNY VILLENA & LUIS LIWANAG

MABINI Lawyer Rene Saguisag in familiar milieu.

. . . DRESSED for a tear-gassing, marchers are defiant but pacific.

. . . UNIVERSITY Belt contingent links up with marchers at Espana-Maceda Line as anti-riot police watch behind shields and Sampaloc residents cheer.

WAITING for the rally that never was at Liwasan, policemen take time out on the Post Office steps.

'Protect us from men of violence'

Last July 27, 1984, I went back to the scene of the crime, Liwasang Bonifacio, for an indignation rally. The atmosphere was less tense, as marchers were still in Quezon City. A woman walked around distributing kalamansi, free, as a neutralizer to the tear gas acid. Students and the urban poor brought extra drenched face towels. Some carried plastic bags of water. The hundreds of police present assumed a relaxed posture, some lying on the grass with unbuttoned shirts. Walkie talkies were quiet.

"Mamang pulis, mag-titir gas ba kayo? Hindi naman tayo magkaaway", I asked. The shade under the trees was inviting. Little by little we talked, as they set aside their truncheons. They said they were tired. Their salaries were inadequate. For days now they had not returned to their families. They did not want to "tear gas". In fact, they did not have any tear gas. The villains, they said, were the P.C.'s.

"Akala ko pareho kayong lahat," I said in surprise.

What an accusation this was. They showed me their name tags, elaborating on the vast difference between the police and the army. They were the Manila Police, not the military.

Right then, two jeeploads of P.C.s drove in, parking under a clump of trees. Dressed in fatigue, like President Marcos at the Cordillèras, the men started playing cards.

"Bakit po naman kayo nakabihis ng ganyan, parang gyera na" I asked.

They answered that they had no other clothes. No, they had no tear gas with them. The crates in the jeeps contained bananas. They were not going to explode any gas cannisters. They had no intentions to shoot. I left, staring at their uniforms and the crates of "bananas". I was sad. Lying has obviously become part of our martial law culture.

That night, in my little waterless house in the City of Man, I reflected on the peak points of these days. Questions popped. Who fired the first shot at Liwasang Bonifacio? Who lobbed the gas cannisters? Who swung truncheons, mindless of how they hit? Who chased us with tear gas? Who shot at the crowd? It was not hearsay or anything I had read. I saw the culprits with my own eyes. They were the military. They had carefully and with such precision executed plans to sow violence among peaceful people. The military were the infiltrators.

Gathering the suffering, and signs of life that brimmed over last July 23 and July 27 at Liwasang Bonifacio, I placed these in God's hands and prayed:

for those many who used their wits, bodies, and all they had, to shield the frightened and wounded from the armed enemy, while abandoning their lives to Him, a prayer of awe and thanksgiving;

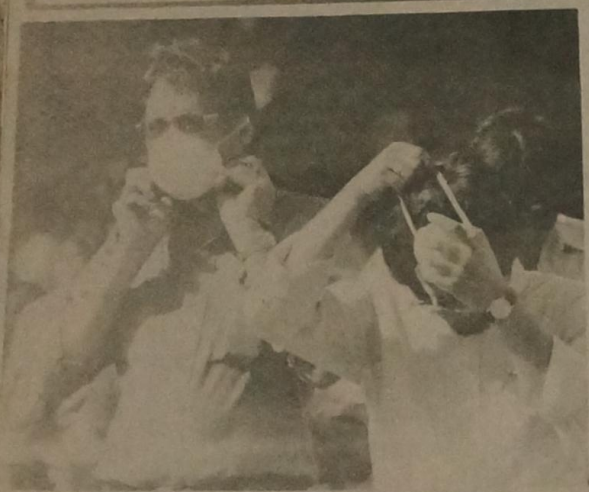
for the military who used their power and arms to execute a new form of chemical warfare, a desperate prayer that they be jolted to their duty to protect their countrymen, rather than blindly obey forces of evil;

and for those, whoever they are, who planned and schemed, and gave orders to the military to gas to shoot, to flush out their own countrymen, how appropriate is the Biblical curse:

"Protect us from men of violence who in their hearts devise evil plots and constantly stir up warfare. May coals of fire be dropped upon their heads, or let them be cast into trenches unable to rise. Let punishment speedily overthrow them."

SR. CHRISTINE TAN, R.G.S.

ARMS linked and faces masked, priests and seminarians are ready to be gassed.



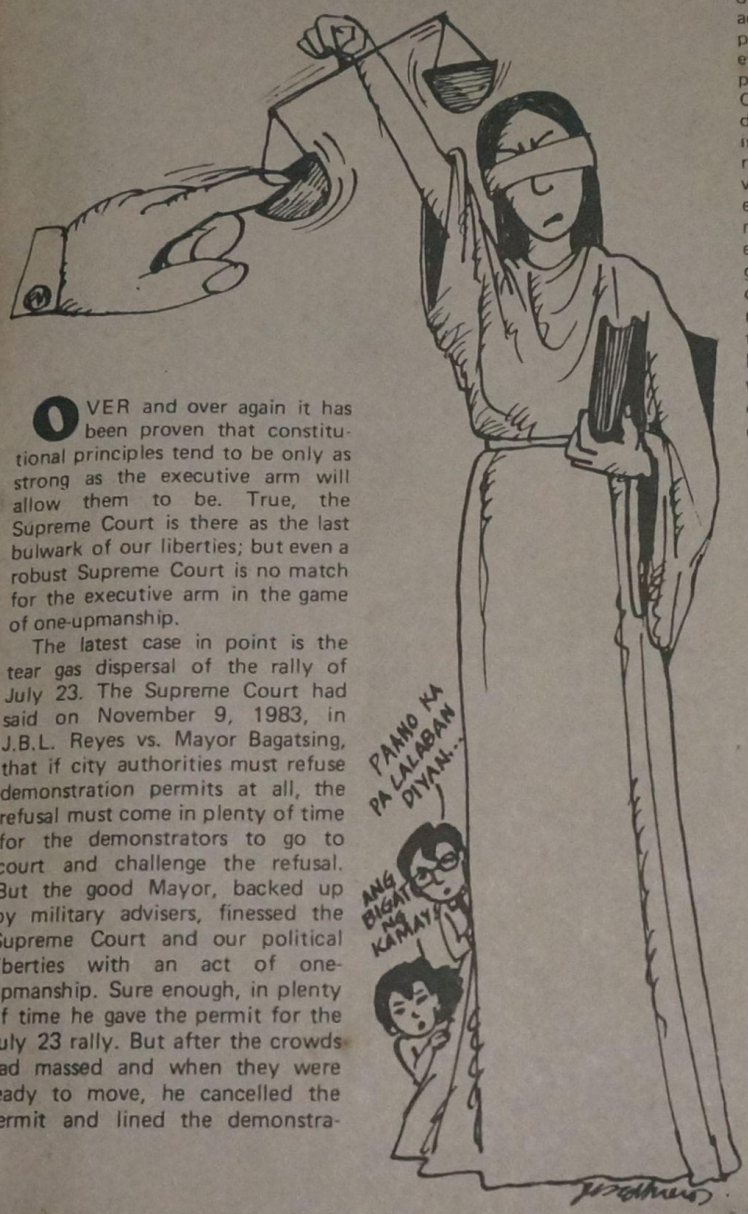
DOESN'T everyone? Butz Aquino and J.V. Bautista do.

YES, indeed.

CONSTITUTION & YOU

by JOAQUIN G. BERNAS, S.J.

CLEAR AND PRESENT WHAT?



OVER and over again it has been proven that constitutional principles tend to be only as strong as the executive arm will allow them to be. True, the Supreme Court is there as the last bulwark of our liberties; but even a robust Supreme Court is no match for the executive arm in the game of one-upmanship.

The latest case in point is the tear gas dispersal of the rally of July 23. The Supreme Court had said on November 9, 1983, in J.B.L. Reyes vs. Mayor Bagatsing, that if city authorities must refuse demonstration permits at all, the refusal must come in plenty of time for the demonstrators to go to court and challenge the refusal. But the good Mayor, backed up by military advisers, finessed the Supreme Court and our political liberties with an act of one-upmanship. Sure enough, in plenty of time he gave the permit for the July 23 rally. But after the crowds had massed and when they were ready to move, he cancelled the permit and lined the demonstrators up against the wall for instant execution. After all, the Supreme Court decision had said nothing about giving the crowd enough time to challenge the sudden cancellation of a permit!

The Supreme Court had also said in the same J.B.L. Reyes decision that permits for public rallies and demonstrations could be refused only upon showing that the public action would "present a clear and present danger of a substantive evil which the state has a right to prevent". Prior to July 23, the City Mayor thought that no such danger existed and he therefore issued a permit. On the day of the rally, however, the military convinced him that the danger indeed existed. The Mayor changed his mind. The clear and present danger existed after all! But after the tear gas attack and seeing the brutality of it all, the Mayor apparently rued his decision. He bewailed the tear gas attack. But what did the Mayor expect the police would do when he made a last minute cancellation of the permit? Tickle the crowd away from the streets?

And what had happened to the feared danger? On July 23, when the crowds dispersed, the most prominent damage that resulted was the brutalization committed by the officers of the law. I guess the argument would be that the brutalization scuttled the anticipated danger.

All of which raises a crucial question: In what venue can one fight and win the battle for constitutional rights? Those who have chosen to wage the fight in the Batasan must cope with the crushing and organized power of the party caucus. Those who choose the parliament of the streets must learn to withstand the blow of the truncheon and the searing pain of tear gas attacks. It seems that every effort is being made to prevent the two peaceful forces, those of the Batasan and those of the streets, from joining. It may be a clear sign indeed that these two are now seen as a potent force to reckon with. MM

Free the Artist, Free the Media

PETE LACABA, secretary-general, Concerned Artists of the Philippines: . . . "beyond a mere printed manifesto."

by FE B. ZAMORA

GONE are the days of artists perennially waiting for the Muse. In these days of disquiet and discontent, artists — usually given to melancholia and moods — are unleashing their passions to charge into a struggle, not only for their freedom of expression, but for full political freedom as well.

When organized a year ago, the Concerned Artists of the Philippines declared that "artists are citizens and must concern themselves with the issues and problems confronting the country today." Then, it was birthing under a climate of fear. Nonetheless the cold reception from the Establishment media (to include the censorship of an article written about the organization in a Sunday supplement), the CAP swelled with membership — some 300 artists and cultural workers from different fields of artistic endeavour, including teachers and students of the art. The issues on hand, then, were mostly sectoral — movie censorship as with the Free the Artist Movement, the precursor of the CAP. And the more general, but highly repressive Presidential Commitment Order (PCO).

On July 28 last week, CAP met for its first annual convention at the National Press Club. It was an altogether different milieu, though equally repressive as articulated in its convention theme: "Free the Artist; Free the Media". The clamor to dissent was much louder, the need for democratic expression more strongly felt and needed. Hanging like a Damocles sword over the artists, to include the media now are the ominous libel suits which, to date, have already been slapped against Panorama, Bulletin Today and this magazine.

When CAP was first envisioned, Lino Brocka, movie director whose socio-realist films exposed the true but ugly slices of life in the New Society that was heralded as the Good, the True and the Beautiful remembers feeling resistance from other artists groups. "But so many things have happened since that day," he says. There was the Aquino assassination, and the ensuing tumult that rocked the nation's consciousness. The protest movement that followed escalated and the artists were not spared from the malestorm.

"The artist cannot separate his art from reality. He cannot dissociate himself from the society. He must involve himself with the people, with people's struggle

because that is where he draws his materials from." Lino argues passionately.

Pete Lacaba, CAP president for 1983-84 reported during the convention of the role CAP played in the resurging movement against the repressive regime. The CAP, he reports, portrayed supporting if not stellar roles during the Aquino funeral, the establishment of the Justice for Aquino, Justice for All (JAJA) movement. The consciousness-raising was not limited among CAP members alone but also to other artists and cultural workers. The CAP sponsored forums and symposiums on topics of political, economic and social significance, i.e. PCO and PDA, peso devaluation, the May 14 election and the boycott movement, and the labor

LINO BROCKA; chairman, Concerned Artists of the Philippines: *"We are alternative everything"*.

FOLK singer Heber Bartolome and Chino Roces: *the Arist cannot separate art from reality.* (Photographed by CANDY QUIMPO)

(Photographed by CANDY QUIMPO)

situation. Not foregoing sectoral concerns, the CAP also sponsored panel discussions on problems confronting the film industry — how it is being affected by the current national crises, censorship, pornography. Also poetry readings in honor of poet martyrs Amado Hernandez, Lorena Barros, Emmanuel Lacaba and Lerry Nofuente.

No longer hiding in its ivory tower, the CAP, in its efforts to be one with the people's struggle, established linkages with various groups and especially with the Coalition of Organizations for the Restoration of Democracy (CORD), and embarked on the "highly controversial boycott of the Cultural Center of the Philippines". This boycott "occasioned a good deal of acrimonius debate, with some members objecting to the boycott and others pushing for a more active, more militant implementation, beyond a mere printed manifesto," according to Lacaba.

But why must artists risk their profession (as in the CCP boycott which meant one more artistic venue lost? Or it could have meant loss of a job, even freedom?)? Doreen Fernandez, writer and academician who delivered the keynote address says it in four words: "the struggle" for humanity which is "at the base of all your efforts as artists, is the basic concern of every artist".

"It is what keeps the theater artist and the theater group going, in spite of endemic poverty, no subsidies, no grants, even economic exploitation. It is what keeps the visual artist working to keep his artistic integrity in spite of the lack of direction in the training he gets, in spite of the temptation on all sides to go commercial. It is what keeps the writer battling with editors, management, censorship, the lack of publication for his work. It is what keeps the film writer, director, actor, producer believing that significant films can be made in spite of costs, shortages, market trends and censors. It is what keeps all of you at your art in spite of potential harassment, possible detention and that which comes beyond detention."

Fernandez says that more than just to be human, "the true Filipino artist struggles as well to serve the community to which he belongs, the society that is the cradle of his art."

"Being human in the Philippines in this era," continues Fernandez, means being responsible to what "the community, the people, need.

The visible tribute of the Filipino artist to his community are the murals which have become focal points in past as well as ongoing protest actions, and have helped to situate the Aquino assassination in the overall context of political repression and people's resistance.

Lino who was elected as the new CAP chairman sees the CAP as "alternative everything" — alternative press, alternative cinema, alternative music, alternative theater, alternative visual art, alternative broadcast, — "everything not patronized by this regime, the CAP is the other side of the fence.".

"We have no illusions that the CAP can solve all problems. But the thing is that that you've gotta be there fighting it out." Lino stresses.

Yesterday, Aug. 2, Thursday, members of CAP were among those who picketed the first day of hearing on the 100-million peso libel suit filed by Chief of Staff Gen. Fabian Ver against Panorama editor Domini Torrevillas Suarez, Panorama contributor Mauro Avena and lawyer Lupino Lazaro. "Lending moral support to journalists and artists in trouble — that's just one of CAP's concerns," closes Lino Brocka. M M

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR PARLIAMENTARIAN

RAMON V. MITRA
PDP-LABAN, Palawan

"Miracle Man" of Palawan

HE looks like one of those bearded, larger-than-life figures strayed from the pages of the Bible. Isaiah perhaps, or one of the other fiery prophets inveighing against the society and government of the day. But the naughty twinkle in his eye (even at 56) gives him away. If he looks a Biblical character, he is also, in his usual uniform of checkered shirt and boots, the outdoorsman (mountain-climbing, sailing), sportsman (racehorses, cattle-ranching, cockfighting), and ex-macho (or maybe not so ex-, to judge from his swooning female voters). And of course, once he gets to discoursing on his favorite subject of opposition politics, he is consummate politician — former senator, once congressman, and now Member of Parliament for Palawan, the "miracle man" who smashed into smithereens the vaunted "bridge to Malacanang" of his long-time political foe and childhood schoolmate, former Natural Resources Minister Teodoro Pena.

So what would Ramon V. Mitra like to see happen in the Philippines and how does he propose to go about achieving it?

The answer comes instantly and incisively, prefaced by a hearty laugh: "I would like to see Marcos removed from office and to get this done in the most peaceful manner possible. The most ideal way would be for him to resign. If he refuses, then another way would be for him to submit to an early elections, earlier than 1987, within 45 days! If he reads correctly the results of the last elections and if this is truly a parliamentary form of government, as he insists it is, then he should at the very least resign and then call for an elections. Surely, he cannot avoid recognizing the election results as other than a repudiation of his regime. He doesn't have to listen to the Opposition. He only has to talk to the KBL assemblymen who had to buck a terrible tide (of opposition votes) or to cheat in order to win. All he has to do is talk to the people!"

Mitra however concedes that this scenario will not happen. "We'll probably have to carry him out feet first! He has not shown any inclination at all to yield any of his powers. I think even if he loses in 1987, he won't give up. He will find a way to stay in power. Maybe through the army. I doubt Marcos would willingly give up power — otherwise he should have done so long ago!"

How then can the numerically-inferior oppositionists in the Batasan make their presence felt significantly?

Says Mitra: "What we are doing is chipping at the President's

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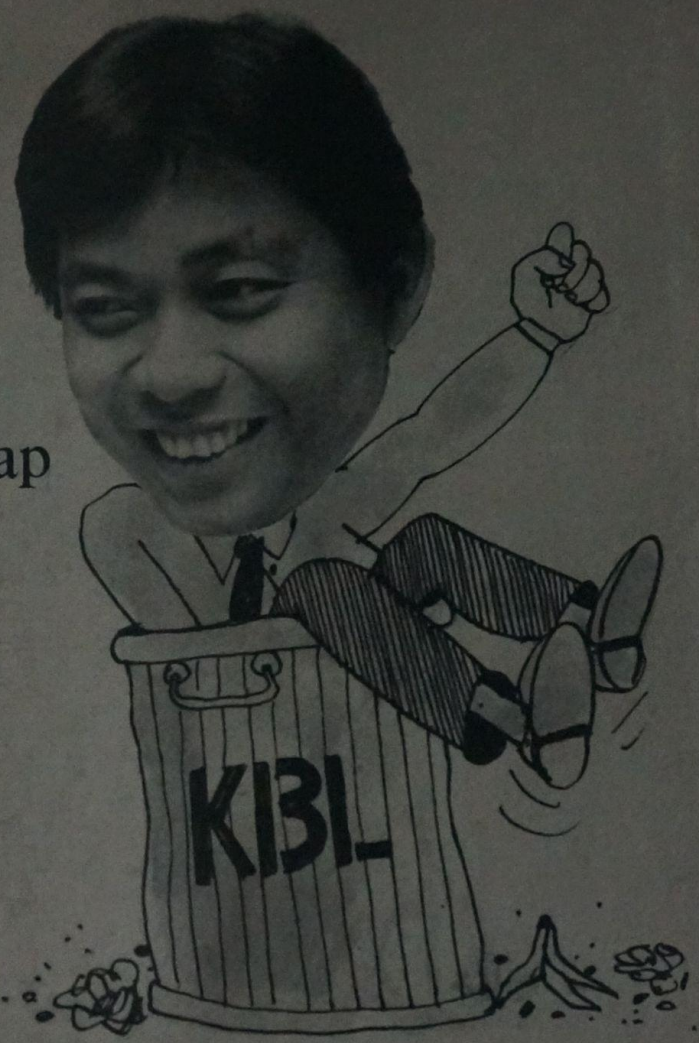
(GETTING TO KNOW YOUR PARLIAMENTARIAN)

ROGELIO SARMIENTO
KBL, Davao del Norte



'Sariling Sikap na KBL'

WHEN, sometime last month, maverick Manuel Collantes approached "KBLs who won practically on their own to press for the review of Amendment 6," Rogelio Sarmiento, a KBL-"junking" victim from Davao del Norte, readily said yes. "I'm a Sariling Sikap *na* KBL, too," he muses. His dissenting view on the controversial A-6, he clarifies, though, is not entirely born out of a soured May memory. "I have always been against Amendment 6 and the President's decree-making powers. You can check that out in the Batasan records."

Sarmiento, 36 and Batasan two-termer, recalls that in 1979, he had already questioned the President's awesome powers. "The Batasan was silent but the Ministers congratulated me at the men's room.

"It was sort of frustrating," Sarmiento digs deeper into his psyche. "The President never informed us that there's a decree for this, a new decree for that. We (assemblymen) were always the last one to know about a new law. And to think that he (the President) is our partymate! The bad thing here is that we are asked to defend policies the rationale of which we don't even know."

He fires more: "The government programs (when presented before the Batasan) are all good, excellently presented. But the problems are different! The government has its hands on everything, it interferes on everything, that's why it's blamed for everything. And the party has to answer for it."

So, what was the role of the Interim Batasan then? Sarmiento replies: *"Sumbungero lang kami.* In that way, we served the people."

Born to a family engaged in agribusiness, logging and politics, Roger, like the Sarmiento timber, is made of hard stuff. "I don't let emotions get in the way of politics." Also, despite the frustrating first term as Parliamentarian, this MBA-holder from University of Sta. Clara in California says the

Continued next page

SARMIENTO . . . from page 27

experience has not entirely discolored his political vision. "I have never disillusioned myself that politics is dirty," a welcome-of-life statement from someone who "never thought I'd be in politics."

Had he not acceded to filial dreams of keeping the family's political name afloat, Roger says he would have been "an ordinary businessman." Amidst all the economic crises now, he surmises "he would have joined a movement," just like what the Makati businessmen are doing." Roger is also the president of the family business Vita-Rich.

The eldest son of former Davao congressman Lorenzo Sarmiento, the young Sarmiento virtually spent all his life abroad, until 1972 when, after spurring a Law degree an MBA, he came home to dabble in the family-run enterprise. It was a birthright that he'd be in the boardroom as well as on a platform. In 1978, the older Sarmiento, then groomed to represent Region XI in the first legislative election since 1972, expressed desire to retire. KBL partymen nominated Roger in absentia. "I never volunteered," he insists now. "My being a politician is an accident."

Being a KBL then (1978) and being KBL now, he qualifies, makes for a whole lot of difference.

Under the regional set-up, Sarmiento says one's candidacy largely depended on the party machine. On the provincial level, he explains: "the constituency is reduced and these are the people who know you. It's the people who decide."

Another difference: being KBL now doesn't mean one gets the wholehearted support of the machinery, or from close friends for that matter. Sarmiento Sr., in a press statement confessed "with a heavy heart" that the Regional KBL chairman Don Antonio Floirendo failed to "exercise vast influence to carry the entire KBL ticket." The ex-Congressman alleged that the chairman junked two other KBL candidates (including Roger) in Floirendo-controlled precincts "in favor of the attainment of the objective to get the No. 1 position for Assemblyman Del Rosario (Floirendo's brother-in-law)." Sarmiento Sr., "extremely hurt and disappointed," rued: "I regret the loss of a friend . . . who is the very godfather to my eldest son, Assemblyman Roger Sarmiento."

Godfather's loss, people's gain? Most likely. Dropped like a hot banana, the young and boyish Roger joins the league of people's hopes in the parliamentary struggle.

FE B. ZAMORA

MITRA . . . from page 26

powers, winning a battle here and there, crippling him this way and that. Already we have been able to return to the representatives of the people more power, through the (modified) restoration of the privilege speech. Also we have won some changes in the Batasan rules, such as in the matter of the Question Hour. These are substantial concessions. With these and many other ways, skillful parliamentarians (among the Opposition) will be able to speak out freely."

What does he want for his province of Palawan?

Mitra answers: "I want for Palawan to receive its basic needs — shelter, education, food, roads, potable water for everybody. I want Palawan to return to what it used to be, the "Land of Promise", where anyone could build a home and till the soil and live off the products of the land, without government interference, without being subject to the officials in power and their relatives who monopolize the franchises and permits for utilizing those products (honey, rattan, almaciga, mangrove, nipa, etc.). I want to see Palawan get its rightful share of the wealth of its natural resources — such as oil, nickel, logs, cattle — which have been going over that so-called 'bridge' to elsewhere. Palawan does not get one centavo from oil. I have already notified Minister Geronimo Velasco about this and I have appealed to the authorities concerned, pointing out it would be difficult for them to carry out their operations if the entire province is 'hostile' to them. No, we don't need BLISS condominiums or apartments in Paris. Is this asking too much?"

Mitra himself was born in Cuyo, Palawan as one of Palawan's "neglected poor". Motherless at 11 months, he grew up in Palawan with his widowed grandmother, later joining his father, Congressman Ramon Mitra Sr. of Baguio. He became a reporter for the defunct Manila Chronicle, finished law, joined the foreign service, worked as special assistant to then Manila Mayor Antonio Villegas, ran and won as Congressman for Palawan. Elected senator of the Liberal Party in 1971, he was among those injured at the Plaza Miranda bombing and one of three incumbent senators (with Aquino and Diokno) detained when martial law was declared in 1971. Married to Iloilo beauty Cecilia Blanco, the Mitras have six sons, none of whom so far have shown interest in law or running for elective positions.

Mitra will abandon his checks and boots at the Batasan. "It will be out of order," he laughs. As for his beard: "It's been there since martial law. We are still under martial law, so it stays!"

LITA T. LOGARTA

COMELEC WATCH

SURPRISING DEPARTURES

by CANDY L. QUIMPO

MAKATI:

PERILS OF AU

Aurora Pijuan-Manotoc's controversial bid for Makati's lone Batasan seat has rounded the corner of another dead-end. COMELEC Chairman Vicente Santiago, Jr. penned the former beauty queen's latest migraine: a 29-page decision signed by all the commissioners except Domingo Pabalate who is presently on leave with Ramon Felipe expectedly dissenting.

The 5-1 vote dismissed Au-Au's appeal to the COMELEC en banc from an adverse majority decision of the first division. The decision affirms the proclamation of Ruperto C. Gaite, Mayor Nemesio Yabut's much-vaunted protege for the Batasan seat.

The poll body gave emphasis to the Manotoc counsels famous walk-out which the COMELEC took as a waiver of their right to submit evidence in support of their objections. Excerpts from the minutes of the Canvassing of Votes, May 17, 1984:

> Chairman: We resolve to continue the canvassing.
>
> DOP Rep: There are pending written uncontested returns, are you going to count those? We would like to clarify to the records that we were not given a chance to present evidence.
>
> Chairman: The Board of Canvassers task is to canvass.
>
> KBL Rep.: The DOP Representative has continuously delayed the proceedings of this board of canvassers on the question of whether or not the contested returns may be counted and canvass the same as already been invoked upon despite the rulings . . . We submit that the lawyers of UNIDO has shown clear and manifest intentions to delay the proceedings of this board. . .
>
> DOP Rep.: Chairman, before proceeding, we have already filed a petition with the COMELEC. The COMELEC should be given time to resolve. With regards to the grounds we raised on several barangays, we should be given time to present evidence which we are contesting as in Sec. 51. This Board continues to canvass these returns. We submit that this Board has no jurisdictions and further proceedings shall be considered null and void.
>
> KBL Rep.: In the absence of any written jurisdiction, clear evidence, we move for the continuance of the canvass.
>
> Chairman: Out of the 41 voting centers we have already read, 8 voting centers are not yet canvass (sic). . .
>
> DOP Rep.: Considering the continuance in which there is no jurisdiction, we will now walk out.
>
> Time of Walk-Out: 6:10 p.m.

The decision reads: "Obviously, petitioner's lawyers realized, belatedly, their fatal error in not presenting their objections *and* evidence before the board of canvassers during the stage of canvassing of the election returns threat. They claimed that since they had failed a petition directly with this Commission raising pre-proclamation issues 'the board had lost jurisdiction.' . . . petitioner concluded the board 'could not legally proceed with the canvass of the returns questioned by the petitioner,' and thereafter staged the 'walk-out.' "

Commissioner Felipe, in his dissenting opinion, questioned the "surprising departure from the pre-trial agreement of May 22, 1984 limiting the issue to the legal question of whether the proclamation in question is void *ab initio* or not. It is believed that this is rather unfair, misleading, and amounts to deprivation of due process and equal protection."

Though Santiago ended the resolution saying that the dismissal of Manotoc's appeal was made 'without prejudice to the filing of an election protest within 10 days' of the decision, Felipe counters, "To force the petitioner at this stage to file an election contest or protest would be to defeat the purpose of the provisions on pre-proclamation protest in Sec. 50-57 of B.P. Blg. 697, which is to curtail the practice of 'grabbing the proclamation and delaying the election protest.' "

In the wake of other COMELEC losers, Au-Au now heads for the unknown perils of the Supreme Court.

NORTHERN SAMAR:

ONG STRIKES OUT

Northern Samar's Emil Ong appears to have struck out even at the Supreme Court. A decision penned by the SC justices on his appeal has six justices (Concepcion, Guerrero, Escolin, Relova, Gutierrez and Cuevas) voting to defer action on the ground that

Opposition lawmakers immerse themselves in issues

THE Parliament of the Streets should not demean the Institutional Parliament, stresses a well-known economist. Of course it shouldn't, especially if the members of the Institutional Parliament are bent on educating themselves on the issues to prepare for the crucial work in the Batasan.

Last Saturday, some 22 Opposition assemblymen, undaunted by a hectic first week at the Batasan, attended an 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. seminar, aptly called "Immersion", at the Asian Institute of Tourism. There they tackled tough economic and political issues. Organized by UNIDO, the seminar featured leading economists such as Solita and Christian Monsod and Augusto Cesar Espiritu, UNIDO's chief economic architect. Economic writer and Far East Bank executive Jose Ma. Fernandez was coordinator.

Considering that many assemblymen had gone home last weekend to report to their constituents on their first week at the Batasan, the turnout at the seminar was quite impressive.

Among those who attended were veterans of the old Congress such as the Minority Floorleader himself, Jose B. Laurel, Jr., Edmundo Cea, Neptali Gonzales, Rogaciano Mercado and Ramon Mitra. But many more were legislative neophytes: Cecilia Munoz Palma, Jaime Ferrer, Rolando Andaya, Art Defensor, Isidro Real, Antonio Martinez, Emigdio Lingad, Hjalmar Quintana, Oscar Santos, Orlando Mercado, Cesar Bolanos, Natalio Beltran, Ciriaco Alfelor, Rafael Legaspi, Bienvenido Marquez and Manuel Domingo. One was a veteran of the Interim Batasan: Luis Villafuerte.

Three eager non-legislators who sat throughout the lectures were UNIDO president Salvador Laurel, Batangas governor Jose Laurel IV and Senator Rene Espina.

The whole-day session, tiring by any man's standards, turned out to be difficult particularly for those who have not indulged in taxing cerebral work in a long time. "I kept reading the U.P. White Paper, but I must confess that I couldn't understand it very well," says one veteran of the old Congress. "But I suppose that if I read it ten times something would gel in my brain." He was unfazed when told by one economist that aside from the White Paper, there was also a "Green Paper" from U.P. Los Banos and many other papers of various shades to digest.

But if most of them were out of practice in brain work, the assemblymen could not be faulted for their lack of willingness to learn. All day Saturday, the resource economists led them through the national budget, the foreign debt, the IMF and the World Bank, foreign aid, government monopolies and the multinational companies. The lawmakers wrestled not only with tons of data, but also with abstract concepts such as self-reliance, decision-making, rural mobilization, accountability and disclosure, militarization, etc.

Later they broke up into three workshops that tackled government priorities and the budget; disclosure and accountability in the public sector; and agricultural policy and rural mobilization. In the workshops the assemblymen this time aired their views on the topics, and these were collated at the end of the day's session.

Far from being frustrated with their limited ability to absorb issues at the moment, the assemblymen came away raring for more immersion and promising to bring absent colleagues next time. Which gratified the seminar organizers no end. "We came up with this 'Immersion' idea after election," explains Doy Laurel. "Because they themselves want it, we plan to sustain this activity, tapping more experts. Our only problem is logistics but we'll find a solution to that."

Assemblyman Ramon Mitra had glowing praises for the members of the academe who have been donating time and expertise to educate the assemblymen and prepare them for the Batasan. "In the old Congress, this kind of expertise was never available to us because the people from academe were largely indifferent then," he recalls. "Had we had this sort of thing then, we would probably have been better lawmakers."

BELINDA OLIVARES-CUNANAN

it is premature, while six other justices (Fernando, Teehankee, Makasiar, Abad Santos, Plana, and de la Fuente) voting to suspend the effects of the proclamation of del Valle pending the COMELEC's final determination of pending incidents. Teehankee's dissention (joined by Abad Santos) called the canvassing board's proclamation of del Valle premature since it was made before "the expiration of the five-day appeal period and the petitioner's appeal with the COMELEC is as of this moment still pending resolution."

Teehankee wrote: "What happens when the Commission however ignores the mandatory provisions of the law and acts arbitrarily?" He cited two ways by which the commission may act arbitrarily: by action, as when the COMELEC arbitrarily authorized the premature proclamation of Pacificador and later set aside the questioned proclamation for being premature; and by inaction, as when the COMELEC did not act on "the frantic and urgent motions filed by (Ong) to set aside or suspend the effects of del Valle's "null and void proclamation".

The Javier and the Ong case, Teehankee said, was premised on the same principle: "The COMELEC en banc has in fact and in effect denied (Ong) the urgent injunctive relief sought by him to set aside the void proclamation or suspend its effects. . ."

Teehankee also disputed the court's stand that to advise the COMELEC to take action on certain issues would be pre-empting the COMELEC's discretionary powers by telling it what to do. Teehankee warned that the refusal of the COMELEC by non-action to make a move "constitutes a grave abuse of discretion which must be corrected by this court under the mandate of the Constitution". MM

BENIGNO S. 'NINOY' AQUINO, JR. FOUNDATION

JOIN THIS ESSAY WRITING CONTEST

The Benigno S. Aquino Jr. Foundation, Inc. is pleased to announce the sponsorship of an essay-writing contest on the topic: "What August 21, 1983 Means To Me" in commemoration of the first anniversary of Ninoy's assassination.

The contest is open to all Filipino students. Prizes will be awarded in two divisions: English and Pilipino with three levels each, thus:

English	1st Prize	2nd Prize	3rd Prize
College Level	P5,000	P4,000	P3,000
High School	4,000	3,000	2,000
Elementary	3,000	2,000	1,000

Pilipino	1st Prize	2nd Prize	3rd Prize
College Level	P5,000	P4,000	P3,000
High School	4,000	3,000	2,000
Elementary	3,000	2,000	1,000

CONTEST RULES

1) Entries must be type written, double-spaced on regular-sized bond paper or newsprint. Entries should be in triplicate.

2) Entries must be written in English or Pilipino. Nine (9) winners in English and nine (9) in Pilipino will be chosen.

3) Length of entries must be
Elementary level: not more than 500 words
High School level: not more than 1,500 words
College level: not more than 2,500 words

4) Contestants must be students as attested to by their teacher in English or Pilipino. See coupon.

5) A pen-name must be used on the entry but the real name must be on the coupon on this page (or a copy of this coupon), enclosed in a sealed envelope and attached to the entry.

6) Only one entry per contestant is allowed in each language. A contestant may submit an entry in English and another in Pilipino if he so desires.

7) Judging will be based on content, grammar, and style suited to the level of the entry.

8) Deadline: Entries must be in the Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. Foundation office not later than August 31, 1984 or postmarked (if mailed) not later than that date.

9) Eighteen prizes will be awarded: 9 in English and 9 in Pilipino in accordance with the amounts enumerated above.

10) Results will be announced in the November 23, 1984 issue of Mr. and Ms. and prizes will be awarded on November 27, 1984, the birthday of the late Senator.

11) All entries must be original and heretofore unpublished. The Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. Foundation, Inc. reserves all rights to the winning entries. Staff members and families of the BSAJFI and Mr. & Ms. are not qualified to join. All entries will become the property of the Foundation.

12) Judges' decision is final.

Name: Level: College / H.S. / Elem.
School:
School Address:
Home Address:
This is an original work submitted by my pupil.
Teacher's Name _____
(Please Print) Teacher's Signature

Note: Please fill this up or any facsimile hereof, put it in an envelope, seal it, attach it to your entry and mail or deliver to

Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. Foundation, Inc.
Ground Flr., Jose Cojuangco & Sons Bldg.
119 de la Rosa corner Alvarado Streets
Legaspi Village, Makati, M.M.

AT the Bishops-Business Conference last July 27, authors of the U.P. White Paper hold forth. (Left photo, left to right: Felipe Medalla, Winnie Monsod, Manuel Montes, and Emmanuel de Dios. Right photo: Edita Tan.

The U.P. White Paper Goes to Town

by TEODORO LOCSIN, JR.

THE UP "Analysis of the Economic Crisis" — or the White Paper or the UP Study, as it is variously called — has been praised by Jimmy Ongpin as "an outstanding example of enlightened scholarship" . . . "impressive for its freedom from the usual jargon associated with academic treatises" and has suggested it "be made compulsory reading for the President, his technocrats, all newly elected assemblymen and anyone else who claims to have a serious interest in understanding our economic problems and formulating possible solutions to them." (See July 13 issue No. 43 in this series.)

Which, in fact, is what is being done. A seminar conducted by some of the authors was held last Saturday for Opposition assemblymen. Another will be held for the KBL. To explain the paper to those who, according to someone in the audience at last Friday's Bishops-Business Conference meeting, probably won't understand it for all its clarity.

At the Asian Institute of Management, a group regularly meets to discuss the Study in detail — a direct response, it seems, to the main impetus of the workshop that produced it. For the chief affliction of the country, say the authors, has not been a surfeit but a dearth of standard economic thinking in Philippine economic planning. Someone remarked on the preponderance of Wharton and Harvard MBAs in the technocracy. This was possibly the reason why there is in the government such a pronounced bias for short term profits rather than a clear understanding of the imperatives of long term development.

Last Friday's BBC meeting, held to discuss the UP Study, was one of the best attended in recent memory. One of the authors, Winnie C. Monsod, briskly summarized the economic analysis portion of the study; Manuel Montes explained the prescriptions. Among the other authors present was Emmanuel S. de Dios, who was principally responsible for the Study's clarity and coherence.

Monsod traced the precipitous decline of the economy under the present regime's contradictory policy of exuberant borrowing to maintain growth in the face of world recession, while knocking the wind out of the Filipino entrepreneur (who might have used the credit more responsibly and efficiently) by cornering all significant economic opportunities and fields for a handful of incompetent cronies.

Judged by every standard, even by its own claims, the government's performance has been dismal. Other countries took the same tack of maintaining income-growth targets through foreign borrowing, but no other has met the same fate as ours, leading to the conclusion that it isn't borrowing as such that's to blame but where the money went.

By the criterion of peace and order and social stability, the government's performance still rates as lousy. As for its claim that, really, social equity through income redistribution was its chief concern rather than economic growth, Monsod referred to the findings in the Study pointing to the radical decline in real income of the ordinary Filipino. It gets worse as you go down the income scale.

Perhaps the only criterion that can justify the government's pride in its performance (that was its platform in the last elections) is "the smiles of the Filipino people," Monsod wryly remarked.

Manuel Montes said that the

by authoritarian governments whose ignorance, history shows, grows in step with their power as that power progressively immunizes them from public accountability. But that would be the kindest explanation one could make of this regime's policies. There is good reason to believe, however, that these policies were consciously adopted, with full awareness of their effects, pursuant to a plan to substitute economic and therefore political power for social consensus as a firmer foundation for perpetual authority.

Pointing up the indefeasible priority of certain rights and liberties, Montes said there can be no trade off of human rights for economic development. It was an echo of Camus's warning that a people that sacrifices its freedoms for bread will soon enough find themselves without bread either, having lost the right to demand it.

"... A PEOPLE THAT SACRIFICES ITS FREEDOMS FOR BREAD WILL SOON ENOUGH FIND THEMSELVES WITHOUT BREAD EITHER..."

prescriptions have a caveat: their workability, and most of all success, hinge on "timing". In the end, what he meant was that they won't work until certain "structures" have been removed from politics and the economy. Since many of these structures (e.g. the monopolies, biases against agriculture and real free enterprise) arose not by accident but by the deliberate design of a government intent on perpetuity *cum* plunder, the prescriptions will never work, if they are ever adopted. Of course, one cannot dismiss the possibility that Marcos may yet stumble on his Damascus (the reference is to the transmogrification of Saul of the persecutions into the Paul of the Epistles).

The prescriptions are directly addressed to the problems spawned

On the IMF, Montes said that in criticising that institution we should keep in mind that it was our government that, like Christ, chose the IMF and not the other way around. the IMF prescriptions are harsh, but Montes said the IMF will consider ways of softening the blow. Without the IMF, on the other hand, the country must take the full force of the economic penalty for the government's profligacy and error. A government without an adequate social consensus won't survive the ordeal.

So we need a new government, someone remarked, but that won't happen with all this tear gas flying around.

Ting Paterno asked that he not be introduced as a "former" anything, since he remained fundamentally Ting Paterno. He only remarked that, impressed as he was with the study, he had heard criticism that the authors of the Study had strayed from their discipline. He therefore wondered if UP Los Banos was considering a comparable effort specifically on agriculture, on which the authors had touched. One of the agriculture, on which the authors had touched. One of the panelists said that UPLB is considering a "Green Paper" to complement the White Paper under discussion.

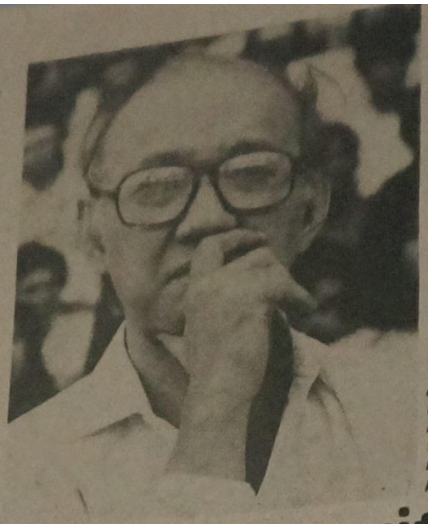
The authors present were asked if they had consulted the government's Five-Year Plans. One of them answered no, as he found the Plans to be more declarations of benign intent than serious and workable programs.

What was becoming clear from the BBC meeting and the general response to the UP Study was that it was becoming the standard reference in any discussion of the economy, setting the terms of the discourse and to that extent the controlling the conclusions that people will make about the economy, the government and the future.

There will certainly be those who will insist that one paper cannot possibly be the last word on the subject of the crisis of the Philippine economy. That may be. But it is the only clear and distinct word and for that reason it will exert a tremendous influence. Any other explanation or excuse, being incomprehensible, will not count.

In Germany, before the war, there was a comic act that showed a man looking for his key, which he had dropped, in the circle of light thrown by the single lamppost in an otherwise totally dark stage. It was obvious the key was not where the light fell. Another man standing nearby asked the first man if he was sure he had dropped the key there. "No," he answered. "I dropped it over there," pointing to the darkened portion of the stage. "Then why are you looking there?" "Because it is the only place that's lighted." MM

by MARIEL N. FRANCISCO



ALEJANDRO LICHAUCO: *"The reason for the economic crisis is primarily because for the past 22 years we have been importing everything we need and want . . . and we have borrowed for this purpose."*

Once more with feeling for Nationalist economics

'We can't even produce our own needles'

ENOUGH of Whartonian gobbledygook!" cries the angry and anguished citizen.

Besides being caught in a debt trap not of his own making, he must daily grope his way through a maze of economic jargon and establishment doublespeak. All he wants is a clear, honest, and sensible explanation of the whys and wherefores of the economic crisis.

After all, it is he, with his vaunted resilience and capacity for sacrifice, who is supposed to survive it. His patience and understanding have been sorely tested by technocrats intoning: "external factors . . . . excess liquidity . . . flexible exchange rates. . . ." And with the Prime Minister/Minister of Finance himself wondering "What crisis?" and declaring that the Filipino "never had it so good," who can the ordinary citizen turn to?

To provide the layman some answers, KAAKBAY (Movement for Philippine Sovereignty and Democracy) has organized a series of monthly lectures on current national issues. The first of this was held last Friday, July 20, at the Assumption College in Makati on the topic "Foreign Debts: National Survival or Economic Enslavement?" Lawyer-economist and former political detainee Alejandro Lichauco, who was educated at Ateneo and at Harvard University, spoke briefly, then had a lively exchange of views with a multisectoral panel of reactors and an enthusiastic audience of students, office workers, professionals and housewives.

Using the methods a seasoned classroom teacher might use to explain a difficult lesson, and, indeed, looking like a wise and amiable university professor, Lichauco won his audience's rapt attention simply by respecting their need to understand what he was talking about. He has been preaching nationalist economics for the past 25 years.

Lichauco traced the country's present economic problems directly to the government's foreign exchange policy, which he described as "criminally profligate". From 1962, he said, and until this crisis, our monetary exchange system was totally free, that is, anyone could import practically anything.

He quoted Prime Minister Virata's statement in an interview published in the Metro Manila Times of Feb. 13, 1984, that "we can't go back to our old lifestyle," referring to the uncontrolled flow of imports in the last 22 years. "This is the only statement in Virata's public career with which I agree," he declared.

In the same article, Virata was said to have announced that henceforth only the barest essentials were to be imported. Yet, Lichauco pointed out, a Business Day article of about two weeks ago revealed that over the last four months non-essential items such as handbags, articles of apparel, accessories, footwear, furniture, and medals and medallions, were imported into the country at a total cost of $500 million, or 25% of the total imports during this period.

On the other hand, vital medicines, such as eyedrops which prevent people from going blind (both he and Justice J.B.L. Reyes, acting chairman of KAAKBAY, suffer from glaucoma, and need daily medication) are not given dollar allocations.

"There is something fundamentally flawed in a foreign exchange and import policy which in a time of crisis like this allocated 25% of its precious, scarce foreign exchange for the importation of non-essentials," Lichauco observed.

On top of these non-essentials, importation of so-called "unclassified items" which was at zero level in 1972 reached $1 billion in 1981

according to Lichauco. These were what he described as the "luxury of luxuries": fancy bathtubs, crystal chandeliers, and other accessories, (possibly for five-star hotels and out-of-town palaces?). This is proof to Lichauco that the present crisis could have been prevented simply by banning the importation of non-essential goods.

Further support is the fact that our accumulated total trade deficit since 1970 — that is, the excess of our imports over our exports — amounts to $13 billion, which is more or less the amount of the foreign debt we are now trying to restructure ($16 billion).

"I have always maintained that the reason for the crisis is not to be found in cronyism, and graft and corruption," Lichauco said. "These are material but they are only aggravating factors. The prime factor is that for the past 22 years we have been importing everything we need and want. And we have borrowed for this purpose. And we have been given loans no end for this purpose."

"WE ARE A COUNTRY WHICH, IN THE CLOSING DECADES OF THE 20TH CENTURY, CANNOT EVEN PRODUCE ITS OWN NEEDLES, ITS OWN CANNED GOODS, ITS OWN SCREWDRIVERS."

The consequence of import-dependence is obvious: as Lichauco put it, we are "a country which, in the closing decades of the 20th century, cannot even produce its own needles, its own canned goods, its own screwdrivers."

This is the reason why the nation is in panic, he said. We have suddenly come to realize that without importation, without dollars, the economy ceases to function.

He cited the Ministry of Agriculture statement to the effect that without "a measly $150 million loan" which is under negotiation with the World Bank, the whole agricultural sector will come to a stop. There is nothing in this country we can produce without having to import the necessary constituents, he pointed out: not bread, not pencils, much less ballpens, not even rice, which now depends heavily on IRRI inputs of fertilizers and pesticides.

"Imagine!" he says, incredulous. "If we run out of loan sources we will not even be able to bury our dead for lack of the necessary handtools." (We import 85% of our handtools from Hongkong and Taiwan.)

Free Trade: the root of economic crisis

"If you leave this room understanding only one thing — the economic doctrine of free trade — I shall consider this lecture a success," Lichauco told his audience. This is the one single concept, he said, which tells us why the Philippines remains at a very primitive level of production.

Free trade underlies every system of colonial relations, he explained. As soon as a country dominates another, as the U.S. dominated us, the first thing the dominant country does is impose the economic relation of the free trade. Thereby, the colony is prohibited from restricting the inflow of imports. This may be a good thing between two developed countries, or between two countries whose level of development is the same.

However, when applied to two countries which are on a very uneven level of development, free trade simply prevents the subordinate country from protecting its market and developing its own indigenous capability.

Free trade was imposed on the Philippines in 1909 over the protests of the Philippine Assembly. Since then we have always been under the doctrine, except for a brief period in the '50s when we had exchange and import controls. Because of this, Lichauco asserts, our level of productive capability today is not substantially different, or any more advanced, than what it was in 1909.

In fact, we have regressed. In 1909 we would produce rice on our own; today we cannot.

Lichauco sees the free trade doctrine as being at the very core of IMF ideology. The IMF was organized in 1946 to compel all member countries to subscribe to the policy of unrestricted international trade, he said · however, no member nation, whether developed or underdeveloped, except the Philippines, has adhered to this doctrine — not even the U.S. which pays lip service to it but practices protectionist economics.

The Protest Movement can't just be anti-Marcos

Thus, imperceptibly, with the inevitability of history and logic, and none of the hysterics associated with the dreaded concept, Lichauco reached his conclusion: "This is what the activists mean when they cry 'imperialism' and 'neo-colonialism'. Our debt crisis is actually the crisis of a neo-colony, that is, a nation that is theoretically independent politically, but is completely dependent on outside sources for its very economic survival."

It is therefore clear, Lichauco continued, that the protest movement cannot remain merely an anti-Marcos movement. It must be decidedly anti-imperialist, anti-World Bank/IMF as well. It must tell the people the whole truth, not half-truths, about the roots of the country's problems.

That may take some time to sink in, especially in Makati. Ayala demonstrators, who have been the most consistent and spirited,

have yet to adopt leftist-associated *"Lansagin!"* slogans, and even among boycott adherents during the last elections, many urged that the imperialism issue should be set aside "for the moment" because they felt it was divisive of the Opposition.

To committed nationalists like Lichauco, however, there are no ifs and buts about it. His pet ideas for the country's recovery are, characteristically, assertions of or steps towards self-reliance, sovereignty, and genuine independence.

He is quick to caution against the government's revived agricultural thrust, for, as he points out, one needs tools before one can plant. Benitez' ipil-ipil holidays or Valdepenas' yellow corn bayanihan farming are definitely not his idea of solutions.

He thinks it a great pity that the steel mill project had to be sacrificed, citing India's success in self-sufficiency and industrialization. He is convinced that, like India, we should engage more in geopolitics to achieve leverage in international trade negotiations.

To do an Argentina

As for our debts to the IMF, Lichauco advocates taking the hard line, as Argentina, for example, is doing. He is convinced that the nation can recover economically in five years' time if it unites on the following proposal: an indefinite suspension of the debts, plus compensation for the erroneous policies that have been forced on us for the past 22 years, compensation for the bases, compensation for the 50 years of free trade — for a total demand of $5 billion a year from the U.S.

"Why can't we demand a measly $5 billion a year? What's $5 billion a year when the Pentagon budget is $300 billion a year," he asks, impassioned. He makes it clear that his position on the bases is that they should go because they expose us to the terrifying risk of a nuclear war; however, if we can't get rid of them he proposes that at least we should demand what is our due. Mocking the $900 million that the Philippine government has asked for five years of base rental, he points out that that amount is merely what the Koreans asked as compensation for the KAL plane the Russians shot down.

"The nation must unite on this demand," Lichauco declared. "I would like to see all the big names in this country, all the influential organizations, unite on this question. I would like to see the business community in Makati, which is very influential, take this position. I would like to see Cardinal Sin exercise the vast powers and moral influence of his office to take this position. But . . . nobody is taking this position except people they brand as radicals."

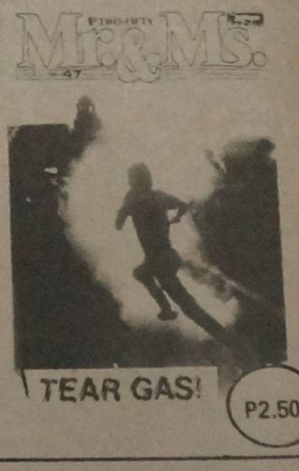
Lichauco lamented the fact that our country has never been able to bargain on its own interests because some people in the government cannot afford to displease the IMF and the multinationals because of personal career considerations.

Nevertheless, he ended on a hopeful vision: ". . . if tonight Marcos goes, and tomorrow a strong, very nationalistic government takes over, the people unite, demand this (referring to his proposal) and get $5 billion a year, in five years we will be the miracle economy of Asia. Provided, of course, we use the $5 billion properly . . . The IMF will take us seriously if it sees that we are serious."

It is the tragedy of the Philippines that its nationalist thinkers have always been isolated from the mainstream of national political life. Theirs are unheeded, truly lone voices crying in the wilderness of a confused society. Only in this decade are we beginning to learn the bitter lessons from having spurned Claro M. Recto as our national leader. Now that all else seems to have failed, now that it's almost too late, perhaps, now, we will listen. M&M

DID YOU MISS YOUR 46th IN THE SERIES FOR JUSTICE & RECONCILIATION?

It was released last Tuesday, July 31. The entire issue featured Andres Narvasa's photo-chronology of 150 photos taken by 13 photographers AFTER THE FIRST FIVE SHOTS. Due to insistent readers' demand, more copies will be made available at Mr. & Ms. regular outlets today, together with the 47th in the series.



THE LAST WORD

by MAXIMO V. SOLIVEN

THE OPPOSITION SHOULD IGNORE VIRATA- THE WAY MARCOS DOES

I CAN understand the Great Ilocano's burning resentment of the attacks on his One-Man Rule by His Eminence Jaime Cardinal Sin, whose annoying pastoral letters have recently been read in churches throughout the archipelago by the Catholic clergy. However, the President was wrong to lash out at the Catholic Church, using as his forum the 70th Anniversary celebration of a rival religion, Ka Erdie Manalo's militant Iglesia ni Cristo. The Apo's attack was launched from the pulpit of the Iglesia's brand-new cathedral and gave the unfortunate impression that he was declaring war on the Catholic Church and saying, "The INC is my church from now on."

Now, history has shown that Wars of Religion are the most fanatical, illogical and cruel — rendered all the more ironical by the fact that they are usually waged in the name of the God of Love and Brotherhood. I'm quite sure Bung Ferdinand does not intend to start a religious war. However, his ringing assertion that we must be faithful to the Constitutional mandate of *"separation of Church and State"* had an especially inconsistent and hollow ring at the Iglesia affair. It is very well known that the Lords Spiritual of the Iglesia ni Cristo exert some influence on affairs of state in this country — particularly, if it is true that temporal concessions are garnered from the Government during election time. For instance, is it true that just before the May 14 elections, an Iglesia ni Cristo nominated Justice of the Supreme Court was sworn into office, *in pectore,* and his elevation to the High Tribunal revealed only after the elections. And that another judge, who had earlier been fired, was reinstated to the bench? Or that a large contract in a government transportation agency was awarded on the basis of religious "connections"?

By all means, I heartily agree that Church and State must remain distinct and separate. That is precisely how our Founding Fathers envisioned a just and equitable society. But if the President is to invoke one clause, he must not neglect other equally pertinent strictures of our original organic law. One largely forgotten and frequently violated dictum is that there must be a system of "checks and balances" in which the Presidency, the Legislature, and the Judiciary serve as a check on each other so that neither department of government should reign undeterred and supreme. When the Legislature becomes a literal rubber-stamp and the Judiciary becomes a joke, then what have we? A New Republic — perhaps?

THE Opposition is wasting its breath when its MPs in the Batasan zero in on The Once and Future Prime Minister Cesar Enrique Aguinaldo Virata, with angry speeches and loud condemnations. The Opposition should ignore Virata — the way President Marcos always does. Mr. Virata, as Prime Minister, is a Zero in our government set-up. His main functions are to say "Yes, Sir" and "Yes, Ma'm", cut ceremonial ribbons, manage an annual smile for the photographers, and go abroad to Washington D.C., and other countries, with his Begging Bowl to borrow more money. I wish I could say that Virata is completely harmless. But that's not exactly true. He goes around the world giving the impression that there is an economic, banking and fiscal policy in the Philippines and that loans granted will be repaid. The truth is that nobody knows, from day to day, what the policy is — if any — least of all Mr. Virata who seems to get his own instructions only on the date of issue.

Why does Virata continue to accept his humiliating role? Because he apparently enjoys it. And, besides, he's got nowhere else to go. At least Ronald Reagan, if he ever loses his job at the White House, can go back to second-rate acting in Grand B movies. In the case of Virata, he is already acting in a Grade B comedy.

THE joke that has been circulating about Virata both here and abroad is that he once made an official visit to the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. As he went down the receiving line of ministers and officials, he was introduced to somebody who called himself the "Minister of Winter Sports." Virata failed to conceal his surprise. He double-checked by looking outside the window at the blazing sun shining on barren desert n this Arab kingdom.

"How can you be Minister of Winter Sports," Virata exclaimed to the man concerned, "when you have no snow?"

The fellow laughed, and inquired of Virata: "Besides being Prime Minister, are you not also the Minister of Finance?"

"Why yes," Virata conceded.

"How can you be Minister of Finance," the other countered, "when you have no finances?"

A more recent coffee shop question goes this way:

"Where is the capital of the Philippines?"

Most people answer erroneously, "Quezon City." (This is true no longer.) Others say: "Manila."

"WRONG!" The questioner exclaims, "The capital of the Philippines is GONE. The money is probably in America, Switzerland, Lichtenstein, and the Bahamas."

Joke only. But **masakit.**

LAST year, we exposed in this corner the fact that the government was importing huge amounts of tear gas (cannisters and bombs), arm and shoulder guards, anti-riot helmets and shields, riot sticks, and other equipment from France. Now we know what the tear gas was for — any kind of demonstration, even a peaceful demonstration.

On Thursday last week (July 26) five thousand demonstrators attended an indignation rally to protest the brutal tear-gassing of 16,000 demonstrators at Liwasang Bonifacio the previous Monday. Only when the demonstrators were *on their way home* were they attacked by gas-masked riot police. One group was crossing Quezon Bridge at about 4:45 p.m. — among them priests and nuns — looking tired but marching in orderly fashion. Somebody carried a banner with Ninoy Aquino's face on it, and another an "Atom" (August Twenty-One Movement) flag. Suddenly, from the opposite direction came a white-painted vehicle packed with soldiers or anti-riot police in fatigue uniforms, protected by helmets and gas masks. The uniformed men jumped out and started hurling tear gas cannisters at the crowd, even amazed bystanders and passers-by. Some of the tear gas cannisters landed on jeepneys. The fumes were sucked into passing "Love" buses (crammed with commuters) by their air-conditioning ducts. Pedestrians stampeded to "safety", trampling on each other. For hours, the victims of this surprise attack suffered burning in their eyes, nostrils, throats, and lungs.

Why this stupid attack on dispersing demonstrators and hapless by-standers on a crowded bridge? The President must not let the matter rest there. He must order a full-dress investigation and punish the officers and troopers involved. They are the *provocateurs* — not the unarmed demonstrators. Otherwise, the rallies and demonstrations will escalate into violence. Hot-heads will bring gas masks and weapons. Or is provoking violence part of the plan?

One thing is clear. Tear-gas attacks have not discouraged demonstrations. One multi-sector, non-partisan march is already scheduled in Makati, climaxing in a rally in Ugarte Field, this Friday afternoon. More rallies and demonstrations have been scheduled in the days leading to August 21, the so-called Day of Infamy.

The President must listen to the protests, not greet complaints with tear-gas, truncheon and a mailed fist. What is needed in this kinetic period of bitter controversy is dialogue — not confrontation.

I WAS in San Francisco's Moscone Center attending the National Democratic Convention last July 16 when President Marcos's photograph appeared in most newspapers, depicting him in full battle-gear with a holstered .43 caliber automatic at his hip. The story was headlined by the San Francisco Chronicle: *"Marcos' Surprise Visit to Troops."* The Associated Press dispatch, datelined Manila, said: "President Ferdinand Marcos donned battle fatigues yesterday and paid a surprise visit to a northern battlefront, where he directed soldiers fighting a mountain offensive against Communist rebels."

Newspapers were distributed free to many of the 3,500 Democratic Party delegates and 14,000 journalists, media men and women, and observers. Among them was Walter Mondale's hometown newspaper, The Minneapolis Tribune which featured the Apo's battle photograph on page 3 in even great detail — covering all of three columns. The Presidential foray to the "Cordillera mountains, 185 miles north of Manila" was equally featured in the Dallas Times-Herald, the daily newspaper of the Texas city where the Republican National Convention to proclaim Reagan and George Bush will be held this August.

One Texas delegate remarked to me when he spotted the Most-Decorated Soldier in battledress in his newspaper: "Hey, man, it looks like your President is going to war."

"Yeah," I gulped in reply. "And I hope he's not going to war on us."

WHATEVER happened to the First Lady's announcement last year that she was definitely resigning all her government positions (except that of First Lady, which she "cannot resign") in May

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1984? It appears that, owing to public clamor and demand, she has been reappointed Minister of Human Settlements and presumably Metro Manila Governor. Promises, promises.

Anyway, perhaps it's all for the best. If she takes both positions seriously, she will save all of us a lot of money by staying home on the job. Superma'm's foreign travels have always entailed the expenditure of a substantial amount of foreign exchange. For instance, her hotel bill alone last January at the luxurious "Helmsley Palace" hotel in New York City, diagonally across the avenue from her other favorite hostelry, the "Waldorf Astoria", ran to an impressive amount. Is it true that it cost $90,000 — owing to the fact that the suite occupied was billed at $1,400 a day?

Again, when the First Lady made a flying pilgrimage to Rome during Holy Week, heading a group of 170 priests and nuns et cetera, she was asked to "inaugurate" the plush new "Le Grand Bar" at the famous 5-Star hotel, The Grand Hotel Excelsior. This took place on April 18. The affair was attended by about 300 to 400 guests — consisting of Ma'm's entourage of 100 persons plus the fabled **Roma-Bene** *(Rome's High Society) which includes titled Has-Beens and the* **Dolce Vita** *crowd. Not a bad climax for the Holy Year.*

The First Lady's group was divided into those who were quartered at the Grand Hotel and the others who were housed at the Roman Villa of Ambassador to the Holy See Benny Tantoco and his wife, Glecy "Rustan's" Tantoco. The Villa is being rented for about $7,000 per month.

A party was thrown by the Ambassador in his residence, too. It was a black-tie-only garden party, complete with colorful parasols and tables groaning with Filipino and Italian dishes. Filipino delicacies were flown in from Manila for the occasion. The guests were protected (from whom?) by walkie-talkie and radio-sporting security guards.

Anyway, I hope we're not trying to borrow money from Italy or the Vatican, too.

AND BY THE WAY . . . In the July issue of Bob Guccioni's racy girlie magazine, 'Penthouse, the following was announced on the page devoted to coming events in the *August* issue: "DON'T CRY FOR ME, FILIPINOS — In the Philippines, people are quick to compare their glamorous first lady, Imelda Marcos, with Argentina's late Eva Peron. But unlike Evita, Imelda's people have little love or affection for her. As Fred Poole and Max Vanzi report in this excerpt from *Revolution in the Philippines* (McGraw Hill), Imelda, reported to be one of the ten richest women in the world, indulges herself by spending a fortune on such frivolous "public works" as film festivals, beauty contests, and her daughter's elaborate wedding. These extravagances have one purpose: to glorify her in the face of the Philippines' extreme poverty and massive child prostitution. "When I go out into the barrios," says Imelda, "I get dressed up because I know the little people want to see a star." . . . I was indigant when I read this. How dare Penthouse run anything about our First Lady, even if she were fully-clothed? How nasty and degrading. Anyhow, rushing to catch my plane, I scooped up a copy of the *August* Penthouse — hot off the press — chastely billed on its cover as a "Special Olympic Issue." The offending article, so loudly billed in July, failed to appear. I breathed a sigh of relief. I guess Superma'm.s story, after all, was not Olympian enough. . . . *Quip of the Week:* In the old days, they used to rob banks. Now they steal the bank . . . Central Bank Governor Jose B. Fernandez's mishandling of the Banco Filipino controversy has all but sunk the entire banking set-up. You may argue till you are blue in the face the "pros" and "cons" of what Jobo Fernandez did — but the end result was a run, not only on Banco Filipino, but on several other banks that had nothing to do with the case. Some people rushed to transfer their money to foreign banks such as Citibank (which immediately announced it would accept no deposits under P3,000) and Bank of America, others to the Philippine National Bank (on the contention that Mr. Marcos would always print more money rather than permit the PNB — already overexposed in certain loans — to fall). But too many simply brought their cash home and hid it under mattresses, refrigerators, planks in the floor, in drawers or tin boxes, or in their ceilings — sometimes with disastrous results. Bank failures are neither new nor strange occurrences. In the U.S., no less than 40 small banks folded in the past year. (When I was in Oregon last June, newspapers speculated that 14 banks in that state were "in trouble".) But by innuendo and abettance of rumor, it was our Central Bank itself that seems to have pushed the Banco Filipino over the edge. And why did the CB want the Aguirres of Banco Filipino to deliver to it at least a majority of BF stock certificates — on a weekend — *"endorsed in blank"?* The P3 billion bail-out fund from the government comes much too late. Banking, like virginity, is a matter of faith. The damage has been done. Too many people have lost confidence in our banking system. The CB should have remembered that at stake in the Banco Filipino "crisis" were the hopes, dreams and painfully hoarded savings of more than 3,000,000 small depositors — half a million more than those handled by even the mighty PNB. For these "small" folk, the loss of even a few pesos could spell hardship if not privation . . . The fall-out from this bungling could mean that even the IMF may withhold its expected and badly-need $650 million "loan" until December or early 1985 — or until we "set our house in order." Let's face it. Sad to say, we're a mess. **MM**

Photographed by MELVYN CALDERON

Make your own tear gas mask, French-style

LINO BROCKA poses with his battle-tested model gas mask. Guaranteed no tears or your money back.

IN 1968, when the rioting students in Paris were routinely being tear-gassed, they devised a do-it-yourself tear gas mask. And now, through the courtesy of Lino Brocka's French connection, the noted Filipino film director has made available the how-to of this French concoction that was so effective the police had to switch to water cannons. Brocka, a veteran of of tear-gassed rallies, and his Concerned Artists of the Philippines are well on their way to make a cottage industry out of the only possible protection of protesters against tear gas bombs.

As another public service feature of Mr. and Ms. Special Issue, we present the how-to of making your very own tear gas mask.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

1. Plastic cannister or bottle (the longer, the better).
2. Cotton, gauze, tape, (Scotch, masking, glue will do as well), rubber (the kind used for slingshots), and char coal.

PROCEDURE:

1. Trim the brim of the cannister to fit the contour of your nose and mouth.
2. Inside the cannister, tape or glue pieces of charcoal on its bottom and cover the charcoal with gauze or flimsy cloth. Charcoal is gas absorbent and a purifying agent.
3. Cushion the cannister's trimmed edges with cotton or any soft cloth. Be sure to use enough tape or glue to keep your cover in place.
4. On each side of the cannister nearest your face, bore two holes and attach rubber strings, the length of which depends on how big or small your head is. This will keep the mask in place.

As added precaution, Lino advises that before you go rallying, rub the exposed parts of your body particularly your face with kalamansi rind or vinegar. You won't be smelling all that good and neither will you look chic in that gas mask. But think of the tears you save, not to mention the grief. There's enough of that already.